Jews, Judaeans, Judaizing, Judaism: Problems of Categorization in Ancient History[1]

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Abstract

The very title of this journal reflects a commonplace in scholarly discourse. We want to understand "Judaism" in the Persian and Graeco-Roman periods: the lives and religion of ancient Jews. Some scholars in recent years have asked whether *Ioudaioi* and its counterparts in other ancient languages are better rendered "Jews" or "Judaeans" in English. This essay puts that question in a larger frame, by considering first *Ioudaismos* and then the larger problem of ancient religion. It argues that there was no category of "Judaism" in the Graeco-Roman world, no "religion" too, and that the *Ioudaioi* were understood until late antiquity as an ethnic group comparable to other ethnic groups, with their distinctive laws, traditions, customs, and God. They were indeed Judaeans.

An early review of *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary* (Brill, 2000-) took issue with my editorial decision to use "Judean" rather than

"Jewish" for Ἰουδαϊκός in the titles of *War* and *Antiquities* and with Louis Feldman's use of "Judeans" for Ἰουδαῖοι in the particular volume in question. The reviewer fairly objected that this non-standard lexical choice, for an important issue, was insufficiently justified in the commentary.[2] She was right: Although I had supplied a footnote at the first use of "Judean" in the introductory essay,[3] the in-text citation format required notes to be few and brief. The following essay is my effort to explore the problem more adequately. This is not for the sake of the commentary alone. I offer it also as a contribution to a fundamental question in historical research: the problem of appropriate categories. On each point, documentation could be multiplied; in view of this essay's length I have tried to restrict annotation to what was necessary for the argument.

Given the theological context of some "Jew-Judaean" debates, especially in relation to the Gospel of John,[4] let me stress at the beginning that my interests are historical and philological: to engage the mindset, values, and category formations of the ancients. How did *they* understand the phenomena their world presented to them, and what do their terms reveal about their values and assumptions?

This is not to say that categories extrinsic to a culture under study are *eo ipso* inappropriate. If we wish to understand the assumptions and values of the ancients, we must take very seriously Herodotus' observation (2.184) that the difference in the thickness of Persian and Egyptian skulls was attributable to their different customs concerning head-covering; we would compare his remarks with similar analyses elsewhere. But if our interest is anthropological, in the facts of human skull sizes, we may not simply believe Herodotus as to the fact or its explanation. We would then need a method that was independent of ancient views, one that found its warrants in data available to us for analysis today. Such "etic" analysis[5] is valuable and necessary in social-scientific study: demographics, anthropology, eco-

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[2] S. Pearce, review of S. Mason, ed., *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary, JJS* 55 (2004): 169-70.

[3] L. H. Feldman, *Judean Antiquities 1-4* (vol. 3 of *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary*; ed. S. Mason; Leiden: Brill, 2000), xiii.

[4] E.g., M. F. Lowe, "Who Were the ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ?," *NovT* 18 (1976): 103-30; J. Ashton, "The Identity and Function of the ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ in the Fourth Gospel," *NovT* 27 (1985): 40-75; R. A. Culpepper, "The Gospel of John and the Jews," *RevExp* 84 (1987): 273-88.

[5] K. L. Pike, *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behavior* (Glendale: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1954); M. Harris, "History and Significance of the Emic/Etic Distinction," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 5 (1976): 329-50.

nomics, comparative ritual, diet, and linguistic traits—though people of the time knew nothing of the analyst's terms of reference. Just as a modern physician may inspect my colon, on the basis of scientific study of colonic behaviour in general, caring only about what I might divulge concerning testable symptoms but not at all about my values, so a social-scientific historical inquiry may apply external questions and categories to ancient society. But in such externally driven analysis, valid criteria must be repeatable by all researchers ("objective" in that sense), logical, precise, verifiable, and falsifiable. The "emic" side of the historical project, by contrast—the quest after Dilthey's *Erlebnis* or Collingwood's "inside of events," the ancients' thought patterns, categories, and language[6]—requires our empathic entry into their own worlds of discourse. Although some may wish to argue that "Judaism" is a stable and verifiable category extrinsic to the ancients' language, that does not seem to be the assumption of most scholarship on this period. In any case, this is an essay in the emic exploration of categories used in studying ancient *Iudaea* and *Iudaei* / Ἰουδαῖοι.

My argument is that the crucial categories in this field, though usually invoked to explain what the ancients actually thought and felt, are neither emic (because they were not known then) nor yet etic (because they are not precise, observer-independent, publicly arguable, or falsifiable), and are therefore beyond the historian's reach. Using categories that were actually current in antiquity forces us to reorient our thinking about their world-views.

The past several decades have witnessed a profusion of synthetic studies of ancient *Judaism*: Palestinian, Galilean, Hellenistic, rabbinic, "intertestamental," early, middle (formerly "late"!), normative, common, diasporic Judaism—and for some, indeed, "Judaisms." The appropriate adjective, the number of the noun, the scope of diversity, problems of leadership and authority, the impact of 70/135 C.E. on *Judaism*, boundary issues ("Who was a Jew?"), and overlaps with a Christianity increasingly seen as diverse—including the problem of "the parting (or not) of the ways" between these two "religions"—have been prominent areas of debate.[7] Even a study as

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[6] R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976 [1948]), 213.

[7] Jacob Neusner's prodigious output specifying the contexts of rabbinic compositions and working out the historical implications of such analysis has set much of the current agenda. An accessible summary of some key points is in *Studying Classical Judaism: A Primer* (Louisville: Westminster / John Knox, 1991). Among the most useful collections illustrating the

thoroughly revisionist in other respects as Seth Schwartz's recent *Imperialism and Judaism* is concerned with the nature of *Judaism*, indeed with "the core ideology of Judaism"—as if that were an emic category.[8]

It takes nothing away from the importance of these contributions in other respects to observe that no term equivalent to "Judaism" (much less "Judaisms") appears in the first two centuries B.C.E. and C.E. How could the ancients have expressed the same concept? Or did they recognize it at all? Is the distance between their terminology and ours so great that we should hesitate to use the term in describing Roman-era realities? Let us explore "Judaism," then, as an entrée to the closely related categories of "religion" and "Jews."

I. Searching for Ancient Judaism

We begin with some observable facts. First, no ancient Hebrew or Aramaic words map closely to our "Judaism." The *Yehudim* were known from the time of the Babylonian Exile (ca. 586-537 B.C.E.) as the people of *Yehudah*, or the region was known as their place, but there was no corresponding system of *Yahadut: Yehuda-ness* or *Yehuda-ism*, or Shaye Cohen's "Jewishness."[9] Second, the Greek and Latin words that appear to correspond, namely Ἰουδαϊσμός and *Iudaismus*, have a different and peculiar history. The Greek is used four times by one Jewish author in the unique situation of the 160s B.C.E., or by his epitomator some years later (in 2 Maccabees), and once by an author inspired by this work (in 4 Maccabees). It turns up again in *Ioudaios*-authored compositions only in two third-century C.E. inscriptions. The term does not appear at all in the large Greek-language corpora by Philo and Josephus, who both wrote

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range of perspectives are R. A. Kraft and G. W. E. Nickelsburg, eds., *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986); Neusner's "Approaches to Ancient Judaism" series (Atlanta: Scholars Press, for "University of South Florida Studies in Religion," 1991-1999); and his (with A. J. Avery-Peck) *Judaism in Late Antiquity*, Part 3: *Where We Stand: Issues and Debates* (4 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1999-2000).

[8] S. Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 B.C.E. to 640 C.E.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 9, 103.

[9] S. J. D. Cohen, *Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999). יהדות seems first attested in the fifth-century C.E. (?) *Esther Rabbah* 7.11, appearing there only once.

extensively about *Ioudaioi* and their ways, *or in literature by any of their compatriots*. Greek and Latin authors mention the *Ioudaioi* and their laws or customs dozens of times, but it did not occur to them to invoke Ἰουδαϊσμός / *Iudaismus*. Why not? Third, though the apostle Paul and Ignatius initiated Christian usage in narrowly restricted contexts, Christian writers from 200 to 500 C.E. *did* employ these terms liberally.

Our first task is to understand why a term that bears such enormous weight in scholarly discourse has such an elusive history in ancient texts.

Translators have not been as reticent as the ancients, but occasionally supply "Judaism" or "the Jewish religion" where the terms above are absent from the texts. They do this, for example, where conversion is the issue (*m. Qidd.* 3:5, Neusner trans.; Acts 14:43 NRSV) or for such phrases in Josephus as "the ancestral [traditions] of the *Ioudaioi*" ([ζηλοῦν] τὰ πάτρια τῶν Ἰουδαίων; *Ant.* 20.41) or "the customs of the *Ioudaioi*" (τὰ Ἰουδαίων ἔθη; *Ant.* 20.17, 38, 75, 139, Feldman trans. for Loeb). Yet Josephus' terminology comes from a different conceptual framework, as we shall see.

The virtual absence of Ἰουδαϊσμός from non-Christian Greek and Latin authors—all gentiles and all *Ioudaioi* with the exception of two small texts and two late inscriptions—already indicates that the term's meaning or connotations restricted opportunities for its use. It could not, therefore, have meant the "Judaism" that we so readily employ.

Modern European languages distinguish perhaps five senses of *-ism* words, namely: (1) an action or its result (criticism, plagiarism, embolism, exorcism, synergism); (2) a system, principle, or ideological movement (Anglicanism, Marxism, Liberalism, Communism, Hinduism, McCarthyism; more generically, imperialism, feminism, theism); (3) a peculiar idiom in language (an Americanism, Britishism, Latinism; archaism, barbarism, solecism); (4) a pathological condition or disease (alcoholism, rheumatism); and (5) a criterion of prejudicial discrimination (racism, sexism, ageism). Of these five, only (1) and (3) have parallels in ancient Greek. The modern category (2), in which "Judaism" is generally understood to fall, as a term denoting a system of thought and practice, has no counterpart in Greek or Latin before the third century C.E. The rare form Ἰουδαϊσμός is therefore a "false friend" to the English -isms of system.

The Greek -ισμός noun represents in nominal form the ongoing action of the cognate verb in -ιζω. Common verbs such as ὀστρακίζω, φροντίζω, ὑβρίζω, νεωτερίζω, βαπτίζω, λογίζομαι, and σοφίζω produce -ισμός counterparts, denoting the action involved: ὀστρακισμός, φροντισμός,

ὑβρισμός, νεωτερισμός, etc.[10] Such verbs often generate also a *nomen agentis* in -ιστής, indicating the practitioner or representative of the action: an ὀστρακιστής, φροντιστής, ὑβριστής, and so forth. This Greek pattern matches that of the English group (1) above.

Of greatest relevance here is the subset of these word groups derived from ethnic roots. Several such words had currency already in classical Athens, especially: μηδίζω / Μηδισμός; περσίζω / Περσισμός; λακωνίζω / Λακωνισμός; and ἀττικίζω / Ἀττικισμός. It is worth pausing for a moment over these forms, not only because of their formal similarity to ἰουδαΐζω / Ἰουδαϊσμός but also because of their programmatic status in Greek literature and thought.

In these early examples the -ίζω verb indicates the "going over to, adopting of, or aligning with" a people or culture other than one's own.[11] Inasmuch as fidelity to one's *ethnos* and ancestral customs was considered an axiomatic duty (further below), such a change to other allegiances was normally to be deplored. The paradigmatic example of Medizing / Medism established this negative tinge: it was applied to those Greek cities (e.g., Thebans, Thessalians) and individuals (e.g., Pausanias) who had collaborated with, sought terms with, or outright defected to, the Persians during their invasions of mainland Greece in the early fifth century B.C.E.[12] The charge of Μηδισμός against the Spartan nobleman Pausanias is tellingly elaborated as "contempt of the laws [of his native Sparta] and imitation (ζήλωσις) of the barbarians…; all the occasions on which he had in any way departed from the prevailing customs (τῶν καθεστώτων νομίμων)…" (Thucydides 1.132.1-2).

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[10] H. Dörrie, "Was ist 'spätantiker Platonismus'? Ueberlegungen zur Grenzziehung zwischen Platonismus und Christentum," *Theologische Rundschau* 36 (1971): 285-86; L. R. Palmer, *The Greek Language* (London: Faber, 1980), 252.

[11] Dörrie, "Platonismus," 252: "Fast immer bewahrt der, der ein solches Verbum gebraucht, kritischen Abstand: es schwingt ironischer Tadel mit, daß einer sein eigentliches Wesen verleugnet, um ein ihm fremdes Modell nachzuvollziehen…"

[12] E.g., Herodotus 4.144, 165; 7.138-139, 205, 233; 8.30-134, etc.; Thucydides 1.95.5; 3.62.1, 63.1, etc.; Isocrates, *Pan.* 157; Demosthenes, *Arist.* 205. J. L. Myres ("Μηδίζειν : Μηδισμός," in *Greek Poetry and Life: essays presented to Gilbert Murray on his seventieth birthday* [ed. C. Bailey et al.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936], 97-105) points out that *Medismos* became so entrenched a concept in the seventh to sixth centuries B.C.E., while Media was still a regional power and rival to Lydia, that it persevered as a label for those who aligned themselves with *the Persians*, the conquerors of the Medes, rather than the more accurate περσίζω / Περσισμός.

Since "Medism" was not a culture or belief system, but something that one *did*, Μηδισμός forms are best rendered either by the gerund, "(the) Medizing," or with the hybrid suffix *-ization* ("*Medization*"). Either captures the noun's -ίζω base in a way that the English *-ism* of systems does not. English has not preserved a parallel form to the ethnic -ισμός words. Our English *-isms* in category (2) above seem to take more from the Greek *nomen agentis* -ιστής, possibly also from a late-antique Latin development that we shall observe below.

The severely restricted use of Ἰουδαϊσμός appears to be explained, further, by the circumstance that ethnic -ίζω / -ισμός normally occur *in explicit or implicit contrast with some other potential affiliation, movement, or inclination*. Indeed, the prospect of one new allegiance in -ισμός encouraged new coinages: "Engage not in *X-ismos*, but (to coin a word) in *Y-ismos*!" Thucydides' Thebans, standing accused by the Plataeans of Medizing (Μηδισμός), at a hearing before the Spartans, counter-charge their accusers of an equally reprehensible "going over to Athenians" (προσχωρέω πρὸς Ἀθηναίους): the Plataeans are accused of "forsaking *their* ancestral traditions" (παραβαίνοντες τὰ πάτρια; Thucydides 3.61.2). The Thebans' conclusion is lapidary: "So, as concerns our *involuntary* Μηδισμός, and your [Plataean] *voluntary* Ἀττικισμός, this is how we explain things" (3.64.5). Evoking Ἀττικισμός is a brilliant ploy before this audience to deflect serious charges.

Amid the conflicts of classical Peloponnesian politics, indeed, the main options were Atticizing and Spartanizing (Λακωνισμός). Xenophon has the enlightened Athenian Callistratus recognize, before a Spartan audience: "Of each populace and city, some favour you, and some us; and within each city, some Laconize while others Atticize" (*Hell.* 6.3.14). More pointedly, Isocrates (*Pac.* 108): "Did not the meddling of the Atticizers make the cities Lakonize? And did not the insolence of the Lakonizers force the same ones to Atticize?" Λακωνισμός enjoyed also another life in political and philosophical discussion, describing imitation of the admired Spartan regimen (e.g., Isocrates, *Pan.* 110). And Ἀττικισμός would later come to mean the affectation of a classical writing style against the evolving κοινή. Even with these more positive connotations, however, both forms retained the basic image of *aligning* oneself with something exotic or alien.

That brings us to ἑλληνίζω / Ἑλληνισμός and ἰουδαΐζω / Ἰουδαϊσμός, with which one might also compare ῥωμαΐζω (the -ισμός form there seems unattested) and βαρβαρίζω / βαρβαρισμός. The verb ἑλληνίζω is widely attested from classical Athens onward. Meaning essentially "to express

oneself in Greek," it occurs chiefly in contexts where there are doubts about the speaker's ability because he is a foreigner or uneducated (e.g., Plato, *Charm.* 159a; *Men.* 82b; Xenophon, *Anab.* 7.3.25; Aeschines, *Ctes.* 172) or where there is an issue of linguistic purity over against contaminated forms (Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3.1407b, 1413b). Ἑλληνισμός may have been used in the same period to indicate the *resulting* pure Greek (cf. *latinitas*), in contrast to "barbarism" (βαρβαρισμός), and matching the English category (3) above, but we rely on later presentations of lost texts for such usage (e.g., Diogenes Laertius 7.59). The earliest surviving author who uses Ἑλληνισμός in this linguistic sense, in his own voice, is Strabo (4.2.28).

Famously, but with added significance given the foregoing analysis, the first attestation of Ἑλληνισμός is in the same second-century B.C.E. text, 2 Maccabees, that hosts the first occurrences of Ἰουδαϊσμός. Following the patterns we have already observed, Ἰουδαϊσμός appears to have been coined in reaction to cultural Ἑλληνισμός, which the author may also have been the first to use in the sense of "Hellenizing."

The verb ἰουδαΐζω is older than the cognate noun. LXX Esther 8:17 relates that, upon the success of the *Ioudaioi* in thwarting Haman, many of the Persians "were circumcised; they Judaized on account of their fear of the *Ioudaioi*." Here the verb plainly denotes alignment with foreign law and custom, in keeping with the pattern.[13] All other attestations of the verb have a similar sense (e.g., Alexander Polyhistor *ap.* Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.22.5; Plutarch, *Cic.* 7.6). Paul denounces Peter because, though Peter allegedly lives as a foreigner and not as a Judaean (ἐθνικῶς καὶ οὐχὶ Ἰουδαϊκῶς), "you compel the foreigners to Judaize" (τὰ ἔθνη ἀναγκάζεις ἰουδαΐζειν; Gal 2:14)—a cultural movement that Paul connects tightly with circumcision and observance of Judaean law (2:12, 21). The only two occurrences of the verb in Josephus, which come in close proximity, mean much the same thing. At *War* 2.454 he describes the slaughter of the Roman garrison in Jerusalem, which only Metilius survives—on his promise "that he will Judaize all the way to circumcision" (μέχρι περιτομῆς ἰουδαΐσειν). A few sentences later (2.463), when hostilities erupt between Judaeans and Syrians, Josephus reports that the latter killed most of the *Ioudaioi* in their midst, while remaining suspicious of the many Judaizers in each city (ἕκαστοι τοὺς ἰουδαΐζοντας εἶχον ἐν ὑποψίᾳ).

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[13] Carl Ehrlich points out to me that the uniqueness of this verb in the Greek Bible must be related to the fact that the underlying Hebrew verb form, מתיהדים, is hapax.

Returning to 2 Maccabees, then, we need to ask how Ἰουδαϊσμός functions and whether it nominalizes the -ίζω verb in keeping with the same pattern. This is particularly important because of the enormous weight placed upon these passages in scholarship, in spite of their scarcity. For example, Martin Hengel has famously defined Ἰουδαϊσμός, by way of introducing his *oeuvre* on "Judaism and Hellenism," in expansive terms: "the word means both political and genetic association with the Jewish nation and exclusive belief in the one God of Israel, together with observance of the Torah given by him."[14] So: the whole system of Jewish practice and belief. Yehoshua Amir even claims, with a similar perspective, that Ἰουδαϊσμός was a remarkable exception to standard Greek usage:[15]

> . . . in the entire Hellenistic-Roman cultural realm, to the extent of our present knowledge, not a single nation, ethnic, or other group saw the need of creating a general term for all the practical and ideological consequences entailed by belonging to that group, with the exception of the Jewish people [*scil.* in Ἰουδαϊσμός].

And Daniel R. Schwartz claims that the latter half of the Second Temple period was increasingly characterized by Jewish self-understanding "as adherents of an *ism*": "'Judaism,' as opposed to Jewish territory or Jewish blood, became the only way of defining 'Jews' which was well founded in the logic and facts of Jewish existence . . ."[16]

This seems a lot to claim for a word that is absent from all Hellenistic-Judaean texts but 2 and 4 Maccabees, completely passed over by Graeco-Roman observers of the *Ioudaioi*, and unparalleled even in contemporaneous Hebrew or Aramaic. A better explanation of this rarity, in light of the usage of parallel forms (above), seems to be that the particular circumstances calling for the usage of this word, which always risked negative connotations, rarely occurred.

In the abridger's introduction to Jason of Cyrene's work (2 Macc 2:21), he sets out to tell the story of those who were assisted by heavenly interventions while they bravely vied for honour, which they did for the sake of *Ioudaismos* (ὑπὲρ τοῦ Ἰουδαϊσμοῦ), which activity consisted in *driving out*

[14] Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism* (trans. J. Bowden; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974), 1.2.
[15] Amir, "The Term Ἰουδαϊσμός (*IOUDAISMOS*), A Study in Jewish-Hellenistic Self-Identification," *Immanuel* 14 (1982): 38.
[16] *Studies in the Jewish Background of Early Christianity* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1992), 15.

the barbarian masses (τὰ βάρβαρα πλήθη διώκειν).[17] Already here we have reason to think that Ἰουδαϊσμός is not a general term for "Judaism," but rather a certain kind of *activity* over against a pull in another, foreign direction. The contest becomes clearer when the author invokes Ἑλληνισμός, which is also not a static system or culture, but an energetic movement away from one's own traditions to embrace foreign ones: a "Hellen*izing*." Jason and his group, the writer narrates, introduced foreign ways—Greek cultural institutions, education, sports, and dress (4.10-12)—into Jerusalem, with the result that:

> There was such a pinnacle of *hellenizing* and an inroad of *foreignizing* (ἀκμή τις Ἑλληνισμοῦ καὶ πρόσβασις ἀλλοφυλισμοῦ), on account of the towering profanity of that impious high priest—not!—Jason, that the priests were no longer eager for the service of the sacrificial altar. Rather, disdaining the sanctuary and caring nothing for the sacrifices, they hurried at the summons of the gong to share in the illicit activity of the wrestling hall! Reckoning their ancestral honours as nothing, they regarded Greek distinctions as the finest.

Here, Ἑλληνισμός (like ἀλλοφυλισμός) cannot indicate a culture or system; it labels a *defection* that threatens the heart and soul of Judaean tradition.[18] The situation becomes incalculably more serious after Antiochus IV's Egyptian defeat and reaction to news of Judaea's revolt. At that time he introduces the cult of Zeus Xenios into the temple, proscribes all Judaean customs, compels Judaeans to eat pork and violate the sabbath, and orders the execution of "those not preferring to go over to the Hellenic ways" (2 Macc 6:1-9)—that is those who will not join in Ἑλληνισμός. The king's policy amounted to the dissolution of the ancestral Judaean constitution (τὴν τῆς προγονικῆς πολιτείας κατάλυσιν; 8.17). The situa-

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[17] See J. A. Goldstein, *II Maccabees* (*Anchor Bible* 41a; New York: Doubleday, 1983), 192. Note the ironic use of "barbarian" for non-Judaeans.

[18] It is to J. C. Droysen's *Geschichte des Hellenismus* (Hamburg: F. Perthes, 1836) that we owe the use of Hellenism to mean the *civilization* of the Greek-speaking world after Alexander. A. Momigliano comments, "The originality of Droysen was to take Hellenism to mean, not specifically the way of thinking of Jews under the influence of Greek language and thought, but generally the language and way of thinking of all the populations which had been conquered by Alexander and subjected to Greek influence" ("J. G. Droysen between Greeks and Jews," in *A. D. Momigliano: Studies in Modern Scholarship* [ed. G. W. Bowersock and T. J. Cornell; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994], 147-61), 150.

tion was dire, and Judas Maccabaeus could find only about 6,000 men to stand with him in trying to prevent the catastrophe (8.1).

Judas' antidote to this *Hellenizing* (Ἑλληνισμός) was a counter-movement, a bringing back of those who had gone over to foreign ways: a "Judaizing" or Judaization, which the author of 2 Maccabees programmatically labels Ἰουδαϊσμός. The noun appears only in such contexts as these, evidently, because of its inherent sense of *(re)alignment*. This programme of Judas Maccabeus and his Asidaeans in 2 Maccabees (cf. 14.6) is not then "Judaism" as a system of life, but a newly coined counter-measure against Ἑλληνισμός.

It is admittedly tempting to read the construction at 2 Macc 8.1 such that Judas called for the support of his relatives and "those who had remained *in Judaism*" (τοὺς μεμενηκότας ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ), which might indeed work for this sentence in isolation. But if the author posits Ἰουδαϊσμός as a slogan for the Maccabaean counter-movement, as it seems, then it is preferable also here to see Judas finding men who, like him, "had persisted in *the Judaizing* [programme]"—that is, not simply clinging to their faith and *remaining Ioudaioi*, but striving to *bring back* other Judaeans and reinstate the ancestral law. Such a reading best explains how the group in question immediately behaves as an effective guerrilla organization (σύστημα): burning towns, capturing strategic sites, and becoming invincible to foreigners (8.5). All along they have remained active in "Judaizing" activities, and that is why they are ready for active service with Judas.

The final two occurrences of Ἰουδαϊσμός in 2 Maccabees come in the description of Razis, a champion of Jerusalem known as "father of the Judaeans." The author relates (14.38) that "in the former times of hostility [or stand-off, or separation: ἀμειξία], he was brought to trial on the charge of Ἰουδαϊσμός—and indeed he had spent every ounce of energy, body and soul, for the sake of Ἰουδαϊσμός." As Goldstein observes,[19] Razis is a narrative counterweight to Alcimus earlier in the same chapter, the high priest "who had voluntarily *defiled himself* in the times of *ameixia*" (14.3).[20] Whereas Alcimus not only shared in but positively catalysed the Hellenizing

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[19] Goldstein, *II Maccabees*, 484.

[20] Space does not permit extended engagement with Goldstein's argument (*II Maccabees*, 483-84) for the alternative MS reading ἐπιμειξία in the case of Alcimus, or his translation of this term as "peace" and the ἀμειξία of Razis' time as "war." Although such readings are possible, it seems that locating both Razis' Judaizing and Alcimus' self-defilement during

movement—understood as a "mixing in" or confusion (ἐπιμειξία) of alien traditions—Razis refused, and willingly paid for this resolve with his life. In this context, the charge of Ἰουδαϊσμός, along with the gloss concerning Razis' extreme exertions in its behalf, cannot simply mean that he *remained a Jew* or "within Judaism"; the high priest Alcimus was also a prominent *Ioudaios*, and even our hostile author concedes that he presented himself as acting in the interests of his people (14.6-10). Razis' Ἰουδαϊσμός appears rather to be the Maccabean (or the author's) programme of *Judaizing*: of striving to restore Judaean law and custom against a powerful counter-current.

In the only other occurrence of Ἰουδαϊσμός in non-Christian Jewish-Judaean literature, 4 Macc 4:25, the context is borrowed from 2 Maccabees. The chapter is about Jason's radical attempt, violently advanced by Antiochus IV, to dissolve (again καταλῦσαι) Judaean law and the temple service. When the king's abolition of ancestral law met only active defiance, even from mothers with newborns (4:23-25), "through torture he tried to compel every member of the *ethnos* to eat polluted food and to swear off Ἰουδαϊσμός" (4:26). Once again, although a tolerable sense might be yielded by the traditional rendering "[abandon] *Judaism*," it seems that Antiochus is most disturbed by the widespread opposition, Judaizing one might say, that has just been described.

That the five occurrences of Ἰουδαϊσμός in Jewish-Judaean writings owe so much to one creative author, either Jason of Cyrene or his epitomizer, who seems to coin the word as an ironic counter-measure to Ἑλληνισμός, should caution us against adopting the word as if it were generally understood to mean the entire culture, legal system, and "religion" of the Judaeans. Outside the Hellenizing emergency and later Christian circles (below), ancient authors found no occasion for its use—partly, it seems, because of the pejorative resonance of the *Medismos* family, which might obtain also if Ἰουδαϊσμός were used outside of the contrast with a clearly repugnant Ἑλληνισμός.

By far the preponderance of known occurrences of Ἰουδαϊσμός / *Iudaismus* is in Christian writings. This remarkable state of affairs deserves fuller examination than we can give it here. Among the earliest Christian

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the time of [the contest or struggle for] distinction or separation—i.e., when these qualities were called for—makes a better contrast, with the support of most MSS and a meaning of ἀμειξία that suits the context well.

authors, even still, Ἰουδαϊσμός was useful only in rhetorical contexts connected with the movement away from X and towards Y. There we meet a new contrasting coinage: as Ἰουδαϊσμός comes to assume the harmful role of Ἑλληνισμός in Maccabean literature, the antidote becomes either "the [Christian] Announcement" (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) or "Christianizing" (Χριστιανισμός)—that is, a return to Christ against the dangerous pull of Judaizing (Ἰουδαϊσμός). Later Christian writers would find a substantially new use for the term, which we shall consider below.

Thus Paul's only employment of Ἰουδαϊσμός, in two contiguous sentences, comes in a letter devoted to the *problem* of Judaizing. A group of gentile believers in Galatia, products of his mission there, have after his departure begun to prefer other Christian teachers who advocate the law of Moses; some of those persuaded even contemplate or undergo circumcision (Gal 1:6-9; 3:1-5; 4:21; 5:1-12). In writing to address this crisis, Paul first stresses his own *former* activity[21] in Ἰουδαϊσμός (τὴν ἐμὴν ἀναστροφήν ποτε ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ; Gal 1:13-14). It is not as though the Judaizers are doing something he has neglected, for the same mindset was part of his background; but he has deliberately abandoned Judaizing for the sake of the Announcement (or "gospel," τὸ εὐαγγέλιον). We do not know whether Paul ever "compelled gentiles to Judaize" in his pre-Christian life, as he now charges Peter with doing (2:14). From the little that he says about it, his former Judaizing seems more in the spirit of Judas Maccabaeus and Razis: a violent harassment of Jesus' followers (Gal 1:13) out of zeal, as he puts it, for the ancestral traditions (1:14). The Book of Acts (9:1-3; 22:3-5) indeed claims that Paul sought letters from the high priest, to arrest and return to Jerusalem those who had defected to this new "way." That would certainly fit with the sort of Judaizing activity we found in 2 Maccabees. However one assesses the accuracy of Acts on this score, in Galatians we see Paul clearly trying to block a Judaizing turn by citing his own abandonment of his earlier activity in Ἰουδαϊσμός to follow Christ—implying that his Galatian converts should follow suit. This restricted sense of Ἰουδαϊσμός seems confirmed by the fact that Paul uses it so rarely, and only in a context of extreme Judaizing. Although he often speaks in his other letters of the *Ioudaioi*, Moses, the Law, circumcision, and sabbath (e.g., 1 Thess

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[21] The accompanying noun ἀναστροφή is stronger than "[my former] life," as often translated (e.g., NRSV, ASV). It should indicate some sort of "bent, inclination" or "turning toward" something, "a going back" to it, or a "preoccupation" with it (cf. LSJ *s. v.*). The *zeal* mentioned in 1:14 confirms this sense.

2:14-16; Phil 3; 2 Cor 10-13; all of Romans), it never occurs to him in those places to invoke Ἰουδαϊσμός for those purposes.[22]

In the early second century, the Syrian Christian Ignatius of Antioch faced a similar Judaizing issue, and his language is revealing. People have been telling him, he complains (*Phil.* 8), that if they cannot find something in the ancient texts [i.e., in the Bible: ἐν τοῖς ἀρχείοις), they will not believe it in the Announcement (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον). Ignatius responds: "Now if someone propounds Judaizing to you (ἐὰν δὲ τις Ἰουδαϊσμὸν ἑρμηνεύῃ ὑμῖν), do not listen to him! For it is better to hear Christianizing (Χριστιανισμός) from a man who is circumcised than [to hear] Judaizing (Ἰουδαϊσμός) from a foreskinned man" (*Phil.* 6). That Ignatius considers movement in the one direction appropriate—*Ioudaioi* may and should join the ostensibly universalizing Christ-people, or *Christianize*—, but the reverse (Judaizing) movement retrograde, is clear also from another letter (*Magn.* 10):

> It is bizarre to talk Jesus Christ and to Judaize (ἄτοπόν εστιν, Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν λαλεῖν καὶ ἰουδαΐζειν). For Christianizing did not put its trust in Judaizing, but rather Judaizing in Christianizing (ὁ γὰρ Χριστιανισμὸς οὐκ εἰς Ἰουδαϊσμὸν ἐπίστευσεν, ἀλλ' ὁ Ἰουδαϊσμὸς εἰς Χριστιανισμόν)—in which [Christianization] every language, having trusted God, has been gathered (συνήχθη [perhaps a pun on *synagogue*, συναγωγή]).

The sense of Ἰουδαϊσμός is confirmed here by the proximity of the -ίζω cognate immediately before (followed by γάρ) and by the issue at stake, which plainly concerns movement from one group to another. Whereas the author of 2 Maccabees had championed Ἰουδαϊσμός as response to the threat of Ἑλληνισμός, Ignatius coins Χριστιανισμός as remedy for a threatening Ἰουδαϊσμός.

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[22] Remarkably, even scholars who recognize the link between Ἰουδαϊσμός and the verb in -ίζω, as well as the proximity of the two in this work, can insist on the standard of the noun. Representative is F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 90: "The verb ἰουδαΐζω, of which it is a derivative, is found in 2:14, but there it is used of Gentiles 'judaizing', living like Jews, as in Esth 8:17 LXX; Josephus, *War* 2.454, 463. Here Ἰουδαϊσμός means simply 'Judaism', Jewish faith and life (as in 2 Macc 2:21, 8:1, 14:38; 4 Macc 4:26)." In some recent scholarship, good questions have been raised about the standard translations (e.g., C. Stanley, "Neither Jew Nor Greek," *JSNT* 64 [1996]: 101-24; P. F. Esler, *Galatians* [London: Routledge, 1999], 3-4), though without the consequences of a thorough reappraisal (e.g., Esler, *op. cit.*, 66).

That Ἰουδαϊσμός did not yet mean "Judaism" as a comprehensive system and way of life (an English *-ism*) seems clear because throughout the first two centuries no other Christian text used the term: not the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, the letter to the Hebrews, Justin (even in the *Dialogue with Trypho, a Ioudaios*), Melito (even in the *Paschal Homily*), Irenaeus, the apologists, or Clement of Alexandria—though the issue was often precisely what we incline to call "Judaism." Late-antique Christian and modern-critical scholarly commentaries to these texts are *filled* with references to "Judaism," but there is no corresponding term in the Greek texts.

From the early third century, things begin to change dramatically among Christian writers. To the church fathers Tertullian (24 occurrences), Origen (30), Eusebius (19), Epiphanius (36 occurrences in the *Panarion* alone), John Chrysostom (36), Victorinus (about 40), Ambrosiaster (21), and Augustine (27), we owe a new use of Ἰουδαϊσμός and *Iudaismus*, now indeed to indicate the whole belief system and regimen of the *Ioudaioi*: a true "*-ism*," abstracted from concrete conditions in a living state and portrayed with hostility. Among these authors, Ἰουδαϊσμός retroactively covers the whole history of the *Ioudaioi* under Asyrians, Babylonians, and Persians (*C. Cels.* 3.3); it is now host to various sects, including Pharisees and Sadducees (*C. Cels.* 3.12). But it has become a kind of intellectual diminutive, the *vestige* of a once-grand culture that, after paving the way for "Christianism," has lost all nobility.

Tertullian, writing in the early third century C.E.,[23] seems to be the pivotal figure, and there are good reasons why this should be so. Although we know little about his life, Tertullian's writings were crucial to Christian self-definition and in creating a Latin theological vocabulary.[24] Lacking verbs in *-izo*, Latin did not natively form *-ismus* nouns (rough equivalents came in other forms, for example in *-atio*), and those that we find in classical texts are borrowed from Greek. Almost completely absent from the Latin canon are the ethnically rooted *-ismus* words: even the rare λακωνισμός is written in Greek script by Cicero (*Fam.* 11.25.2). Given this general

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[23] The chronology is finally established on rigorously historical grounds in T. D. Barnes, *Tertullian: A Historical and Literary Study* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 30-56.

[24] See especially E. Osborn, *Tertullian: First Theologian of the West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), e.g., xiii-xvii, 139-43; also B. B. Warfield, "Tertullian and the Beginnings of the Doctrine of the Trinity," in idem, *Studies in Tertullian and Augustine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1930), 3-109.

avoidance of -*ismus* forms, it is all the more striking that Tertullian should for the first time use both *Christianismus* (4 times) and *Iudaismus* (about 24 times). Further, every occurrence of *Christianismus* is paired with *Iudaismus*. But the juxtaposition no longer highlights two possible directions of movement, as in Ignatius, the Greek -ίζω base having fallen away: now it contrasts a living system with a defunct precursor. Thus, Tertullian interprets Marcion's distinction between Law and Gospel as one between *Iudaismus* and *Christianismus* (*Marc.* 4.6); he declares that John the Baptist marked the end of *Iudaismus* and beginning of *Christianismus* (4.33); he paraphrases Paul to the effect that *Christianismus* had a noble lineage in Abraham, whereas the slave woman Hagar produced the legal bondage of *Iudaismus* (*Iudaismi servitutem legalem*; 5.4); and he asserts that Isa 3:3 predicted Paul's departure from Judaea, "that is from *Iudaismus*, for the construction of *Christianismus*" (5.6).

From these passages it emerges that Tertullian requires formally parallel terms to contrast with belief in Jesus, and he resorts to the -*ismus* form to enhance the contrast. When he is not making such contrasts, he has a rich vocabulary for *Christiani* and their faith, and so does not need *Christianismus*; for the Judaeans, however, choices are limited and so he employs *Iudaismus* often. This usage strips away all that was different in Judaean culture—its position among ancient peoples, ancestral traditions, laws and customs, constitution, aristocracy, priesthood, philosophical schools—abstracting only an impoverished *belief system*.

Whereas many of his predecessors, bothered by the charge of Christian novelty, had tried to find proto-Christians in either age-old Judaean tradition or Greek philosophy, Tertullian famously rejected such strategies: "What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem?" "What agreement is there between the Academy and the Church?" (*Praescr.* 7).[25] Rather, Tertullian happily conceded the *novelty* of the Christian *disciplina* or *nomen* or *secta* (he rejects *factio* as a slur), which "is quite young, from the time of Tiberius (*quam aliquanto novellam, ut tiberiani temporis*), *as everyone knows and we fully grant…*" (*Apol.* 21; cf. 5, 7, 40; *Nat.* 1.7; *Marc.* 1.16).[26] Marcion had also sought to separate following Jesus from Judaean law or history, attrib-

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[25] See, e.g., H. B. Timothy, *The Early Christian Apologists and Greek Philosophy: Exemplified by Irenaeus, Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria* (Assen: van Gorcum, 1973).

[26] It is telling that Tertullian, who so forcefully rejected existing categories for Christianity, would himself later join the apocalyptic New Prophecy of Montanus. Only an apocalyptic world view (cf. also Paul) could care not at all about existing norms.

uting the latter to a lesser God, but that solution was unacceptable to Tertullian because it left to the *Ioudaioi* an ongoing vitality—continuing with their laws as they awaited their Messiah (*Marc.* 3.23; 4.6). Marcion recognized the ongoing culture of the Judaeans, and tried only to divorce his faith from it. For Tertullian, *Iudaismus* ended in principle with the coming of Jesus and it survives only vestigially.

His handling of Judaean tradition is no more ambiguous than his attacks on Greek and Roman culture. In *Adversus Iudaeos* he insists that each element of the Mosaic Law was envisaged from the start as provisional (e.g. 4, on sabbath: *ad tempus et praesentis causae necessitatem... non ad perpetui temporis observationem*). The abolition of the Law was fully predicted by the prophets (*Marc.* 5.4), as was the putative wretched condition of the Judaeans after their rejection of Christ (*Marc.* 3.23). Because of their failure to accept Christ in the interval between Tiberius (i.e., Jesus' death) and Vespasian (Jerusalem's destruction), the Judaeans' territory has been made desolate, their cities have been burned, and foreigners now devour their patrimony (*Adv. Iud.* 13). They *formerly* had a covenant with God, but it is over: they have been cast away because of their sin, and the Christians have taken their place (*Praescr.* 8).

Crucial here is Tertullian's decoupling of the Judaean people from its land and legitimacy, therefore from what had made it *different in kind* from Christian belief. Chapter 21 of the *Apology* is a succinct statement. At first, he says, the Judaeans enjoyed God's favour and greatly flourished as a people, with a large kingdom and great happiness (*felicitas*). But how deeply they have sinned in rejecting Christ "their own present ruin proves" (*probaret exitus hodiernus ipsorum*):

> Scattered, wanderers, exiles from their own sun and sky, they roam the earth *without a king, either human or divine*; to them is granted not even the foreigner's right to set foot once in their ancestral land (*Dispersi, palabundi, et soli et caeli sui extorres vagantur per orbem sine homine, sine deo rege, quibus nec advenarum iure terram patriam saltim vestigio salutare conceditur*).

It is of this formerly great and blessed *ethnos* (*gens, genus*), now landless, abandoned, and eclipsed by *Christianismus*, that Tertullian uses the term *Iudaismus*. And this will be the new function of the word that had formerly found such patchy employment. For Christian authors, *Iudaismus* is Judaean culture deprived of all that had made it compelling to Judaizers, an ossified system flash-frozen with the arrival of Jesus, which will now

suffer—construed as a system of postulates—by comparison with *Christianismus*. As T. D. Barnes has observed, "For Tertullian (as for many later Christians) Judaism was an unchanging, fossilized faith, not to be taken seriously or deserving proper attention."[27]

Similarly, the fourth-century Victorinus will define *Iudaismus* with all sterility as "works of the law and keeping the sabbath and circumcision" (*id est Iudaismus, opera legis et sabbati observatio at circumcisio; Comm. Gal.* 1.1.20). This way of defining the Other anticipates critiques of modern Orientalism, "in which one part, the Oriental, remains trapped, separate, unheard, though described to enable the freedom of the describing and defining party."[28]

Tertullian's verbal swordsmanship[29] could not be confused with a historical assessment of the Judaeans' contemporary position. The "scattering" he adduces as though it were devastating had in fact begun many centuries before Jerusalem fell to Titus; even after 135 C.E., Judaeans remained amply present in Judaea / Palaestina—though outside of Jerusalem. Tertullian was writing at about the time that Judah the Patriarch was publishing the Mishnah, the first great compendium of *halakhah*, which along with the Tosefta reveals intense activity among a sizeable sector of the Judaean elite.[30] A number of diaspora communities flourished from the second to the fourth centuries (e.g., Rome, Ostia, Stobi, Sardis, Aphrodisias, Dura), as both site remains and funerary inscriptions attest,[31] and other evidence confirms that Judaizing continued vigorously.[32] Tellingly,

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[27] Barnes, *Tertullian*, 92.

[28] Z. Sardar, *Orientalism* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999), 116; cf. E. W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Random House, 1978), 236-40.

[29] See R. D. Sider, *Ancient Rhetoric and the Art of Tertullian* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 127-28; cf. Barnes, *Tertullian*, 211-32. The opening characterization of Marcion and Pontus in *Marc.* 1.1 gives an idea of the orator's ability.

[30] A convenient collection of essays by experts on Judaean leadership from 70 to 500 or so is in H. Shanks, ed., *Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism: A Parallel History of Their Origins and Early Development* (Washington DC: Biblical Archaeological Society, 1996).

[31] E.g., P. Trebilco, *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); L. H. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); L. I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 160-290.

[32] See L. H. Feldman, "Proselytism by Jews in the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Centuries," *JSJ* 24 (1993): 1-58; Feldman, *Jew and Gentile*, 288-415. One need not accept all of Feldman's arguments (e.g., in relation to population numbers) to affirm the general picture.

although non-Christian observers of the second to fourth centuries inter-
preted the catastrophes of 70 and 135 as great humiliations for the Judae-
ans, this did not prevent them from regarding the Judaeans as a viable
ethnos among the others, with an established place in the world, a constitu-
tion, and an ancestral homeland; they rather saw the Christians as the
oddity for lacking such traditions (see further Part III below).

Writing a few decades after Tertullian, Origen is interesting because
although nine of his thirty uses of Ἰουδαϊσμός appear in his eight-volume
response to the philosopher Celsus, where the question of Christians and
Ioudaioi comes often to the fore, all nine are Origen's own formulations,
often in a pair with Χριστιανισμός (*C. Cels.* 1.2.2; 3.12.21, 13.11, 14.19).
It was not the philosopher but the theologian who used these comparative
categories.

By the time of Eusebius in the fourth century, Ἰουδαϊσμός is evidently
a system of thought removed from real life in Judaea, an abstraction to be
treated theologically. For example, in his *Demonstration of the Gospel* he
repeatedly defines Χριστιανισμός as "neither *Ioudaismos* nor *Hellenismos*,"
but a *new and true* divine philosophy (*Praep. ev.* 1.5.12; *Dem. ev.* 1.2.1).
Again: "For if Ἰουδαϊσμός was [note the tense: ἦν] nothing other than the
constitution according to Moses, and Moses appeared long after the times
of those mentioned [the patriarchs], then clearly those who lived before
him, whose piety is attested, were not *Ioudaioi*" (*Dem. ev. 1.2.5*). Eusebius
may signal his awareness of the relative novelty of this language when he
writes with optative verbs: "One might suitably call (εὐλόγως ἄν τις
ὀνομάσειε) the constitution ordered according to the law of Moses, con-
nected with the one God above all, Ἰουδαϊσμός; and Ἑλληνισμός, in a
word, the *superstitious belief* in many Gods, according to the ancestral cus-
toms of all the *ethne*" (*Dem. ev.* 1.2.2). Both categories are defined for the
convenience of Christian apologetic, with all of the depth, diversity, and
richness of the concrete cultures removed. In spite of evidence for the
ongoing adoption of Judaean law by others even in the fourth century (see
Part III below), Eusebius posits the inapplicability of Moses' law to anyone
except the *Ioudaioi* of Jesus' time in *Ioudaia*, as proof of the need for
another, universal way—one that has now supplanted *Ioudaismos* (*Dem.
ev.* 1.2.16-17).

A little later, Epiphanius (d. 403) ranges Ἰουδαϊσμός alongside
Βαρβαρισμός, Ἑλληνισμός, Σκυθισμός, and Σαμαρειτισμός as an arch-
faction (or heresy, αἵρεσις), the font of seven others (Pharisees, Sadducees,
etc.). And the fourth-century Filastrius of Brescia focuses all of this with a

creative interpretation of Ps 1:1: "Happy is the man who does not abide in the counsel of the wicked—that is, of the pagans (*id est paganorum*)—and does not stand in the path of sinners—of the *Iudaei*, of course (*quippe iudaeorum*)—and does not sit in the seat of disease—especially, of the heretics (*utique hereticorum*)." He goes on to describe these three wicked tribes with substantives, as "of course (*quippe*) *paganitas, Iudaismus*, and all the heresies" (*et omni heresi; Diversarum haereseon liber* 29.15-20).

Why this development of *Iudaismus* as a static category occurred among Christians is not difficult to see. By about 200 C.E. the Church was making headway as a popular movement, or a constellation of loosely related movements. In that atmosphere, in which internal and external self-definition remained a paramount concern, Tertullian and others felt strong enough to jettison earlier attempts at accommodating their faith to existing categories, especially efforts to portray themselves as Judaeans,[33] and to see commitment to Christ as *sui generis*. Rather than admitting the definitive status of the established forms and responding defensively, they began to project the hybrid form of *Christianismus* on other groups to facilitate polemical contrast (σύγκρισις).[34] The most important group for Christian self-definition had always been the *Ioudaioi*, and so they were the group most conspicuously reduced to such treatment, which generated a static and systemic abstraction called Ἰουδαϊσμός / *Iudaismus*.

With this background in view, we may now turn to the two Greek inscriptions that mention Ἰουδαϊσμός. As usual, the chief obstacle to interpreting them is our complete ignorance about the lives of those represented. The first (*CIJ* 1.537; Noy, *JIWE* 2.584) is an epitaph from Rome or Porto, apparently from the third or fourth century, for one Cattia Ammias, daughter of the "father of the synagogue" Menophilus: "having lived well in Ἰουδαϊσμός, having lived thirty-four years with her spouse" (καλῶς βιώσασα ἐν ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ, ἔτη ζήσασα τριάκοντα καὶ τέσσαρα μετὰ τοῦ συμβίου). That the author uses two synonymous verbs for living—one "in *Ioudaismos*" and the other with her life-partner for thirty-four years—seems to preclude Amir's translation: "lived with her spouse

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[33] Osborn, *Tertullian*, 118-19: "Tertullian shows a remarkable change in Christian attitude [*sic*] to Jews… Tertullian is not afraid of Jews. The triumphant spread of Christian faith proves that a new covenant and a new law have been given…"

[34] Germane observations are in J. B. Rives, "Christian Expansion and Christian Ideology," in *The Spread of Christianity in the First Four Centuries: Essays in Explanation* (ed. W. V. Harris; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 15-41, esp. 22-23.

for thirty-four years a gracious life inside Judaism."[35] Although it could be that Cattia lived her whole life nobly (honourably, virtuously, finely) "in Judaism" as a system, in which case the epitaph's writers would have adopted the Christian usage of the period, the extreme rarity of the noun among the many hundreds of known Jewish inscriptions as in Jewish literature (above) should make us hesitate.

There is no reason why such language might not indicate a situation in which both father and daughter adopted a Judaean way of life, or Judaized, and the epitaph writers honoured her decision in the notice that "in Judaizing" she flourished. We know of at least fourteen explicit "proselyte" inscriptions,[36] and some of the many others that identify the deceased as a Ἰουδαῖος / Ἰουδαῖα or Ἰουδαϊκός might indicate either a convert[37] or a sympathizer-Judaizer.[38] So too the striking epithet "lover of [this] people" (φιλόλαος), which appears only in *Ioudaios*-related inscriptions as a real adjective, used of men also characterized "lovers of the commandment" (φιλάλαος φιλέντολος; *CIJ* 1.203, 509; *JIWE* 2.240) might indicate converts or sympathizers; in other Greek inscriptions it is a personal name (e.g., *IG* 2[2].175; 7.1888e; 7.2810; 9[2].470, 474a, 517, 553, 590, 1362). The second man, Pancharius, is said to have "lived well" (καλῶς βιώσας) in this condition, as a lover of the people—a striking parallel to Cattia's "having lived well in *Ioudaismos*." He was also a "father of the synagogue," like Cattia's father and Polycharmus below.

The more famous inscription (*CIJ* 1.694) occupies thirty-three lines of a monumental column reused for a church in Stobi, Roman Macedonia, and dates from the late third century C.E.:[39]

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[35] Amir, Ἰουδαϊσμός, 36.

[36] Seven of these are in Rome (*CIJ* 1.21, 68, 202, 222, 256, 462, 523; Noy, *JIWE* 2.62, 218, 224, 392, 489, 491, 577); one (on the most probable reading) is from Venosa: *CIJ* 1.576 [Noy, *JIWE* 1.52]. For the rest see P. W. van der Horst, *Ancient Jewish Epitaphs* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1991), 70.

[37] Cresces Sinicerius from the Nomentana catacomb is designated *Iudeus proselitus* (*CIJ* 1.68; Noy *JIWE* 2.491). Especially in cases where the deceased lies in a burial complex with other *Ioudaioi*, the ethnicon alone *might* indicate a convert.

[38] R. S. Kraemer, "On the Meaning of the Term 'Jew' in Greco-Roman Inscriptions," *HTR* 82 (1989): 35-53. Cf. Cassius Dio 37.17.1 for the claim that *Ioudaios* was used also of those who lived according to Judaean laws, though not actually (ancestrally?) *Ioudaioi* (further below) and Van der Horst, *Ancient Jewish Epitaphs*, 68-70.

[39] Cf. M. Hengel, "Die Synagogeninschrift von Stobi," *ZNW* 57 (1966): 145-83; Levine, *Synagogue*, 254.

> Claudius Tiberius Polycharmus, who is also [called] Achyrius, the father of
> the synagogue in Stobi (ὁ πατὴρ τῆς ἐν Στόβοις συναγωγῆς), having enacted
> every policy in accord with Ἰουδαϊσμός (πολιτευσάμενος πᾶσαν πολιτείαν
> κατὰ τὸν Ἰουδαϊσμόν), has, in keeping with a vow, [given] the buildings [or
> house complex (τοὺς μὲν οἴκους)] and the *triclinium* along with the *tetrastoon*
> for the sacred space, from private funds, without touching in any way the
> sacred [fund]. But authority and control over all and every part of the upper
> areas shall be retained by me, Claudius Tiberius Polycharmus, and by my
> heirs for life. Whoever might wish to renovate any of what has been donated
> by me shall donate to the Patriarch 250,000 *denarii*. So I have resolved—and
> as for providing for the maintenance of the brick for the upper areas, [that
> falls to] me and my heirs.

Notice first that, if Polycharmus' Patriarch is the *Nasi* in Judaea (Galilee),
as appears likely, the inscription joins an array of evidence confirming the
ongoing vitality of Judaean life in the homeland through the third century.[40]

The inscription is curious in a number of ways, not least because of the
tension between Polycharmus' exultation over his large gift and his defen-
siveness about what was *not* given but remains in his control. It is not
about the man's inner life, but concerns his benefactions to the synagogue
and the fate of the connected buildings. The clause of greatest relevance to
us, usually rendered along the lines of "having lived my whole life *accord-
ing to Judaism*,"[41] seems rather to have the standard political sense reflected
in my translation above, given that the cognate πολιτεία is the object of
the verb.[42] The context also has to do with public benefactions: on Hengel's
convincing analysis, the donation of the principal rooms of a large private
house for use as a synagogue. Thus, the patron grounds his appeal for
respectful consideration of his rights in the claim that all his public activity
has been in keeping with Ἰουδαϊσμός.

Aside from Ἰουδαϊσμός, the meaning of which remains to be seen, there
is nothing to identify Polycharmus' ethnicity. The title "father of the syna-
gogue" might seem to suggest that he was a born *Ioudaios*, except that
"father" and "mother" were honorific titles paralleled across the Mediter-

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[40] See Hengel, "Stobi," 152-59 and notes, for a convincing argument about the Patriarch's
identity.

[41] E.g., Levine, *Synagogue*, 252.

[42] For πολιτεύομαι in general see S. Mason, "Was Josephus a Pharisee? A Re-examination
of *Life* 12," *JJS* 40 (1989): 31-45.

ranean.[43] A well-known sarcophagal inscription from Rome (*CIJ* 1.523; Noy, *JIWE* 2.577) honours as "mother" of *two* synagogues Veturia Paulla, who was herself a convert (*proselyta*) at age 70. Indeed, gentile patrons are elsewhere found donating buildings for synagogue use "out of their private funds," as here: Iulia Severa, high priestess of the imperial cult at Phrygian Acmonia, who constructed and donated a property in the first century C.E.;[44] Luke's friendly centurion (Luke 7:2-5), whose historicity is irrelevant for this purpose; and Tation the daughter of Straton from Phocaea in Ionia, who constructed both a house and an open courtyard out of her own resources as a gift for the *Ioudaioi* (ἔχαρίσατο τοῖς ᾿Ιουδαίοις)—and they gratefully reciprocated with a golden crown and a place of honour (προεδρία).[45] One thinks also of the θεοσεβεῖς-donors of Aphrodisias, from the same period as the Stobi inscription and later,[46] or of the patronal *archisynagogoi*—not necessarily *Ioudaioi*—uncovered by Rajak and Noy.[47] A scenario in which Polycharmus was either a wealthy gentile sympathizer or a convert,[48] who donated his private property for the sacred use of the *Ioudaioi*, seems at least as good an explanation of his civic policies "according to ᾿Ιουδαϊσμός" (i.e., aligning himself with this foreign *ethnos*) as the assumption that he was a *Ioudaios* born and raised.

Whether such Judaizing explains the *Ioudaismos* that enabled Cattia to flourish and guided Polycharmus' public life, or whether their inscriptions

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[43] Levine, *Synagogue*, 404-405. He comments (405), "what is recorded could well fit the activities of any wealthy patron," though he detects a deeper involvement in synagogue activity on the part of Polycharmus.

[44] Trebilco, *Communities*, 58-60.

[45] Trebilco, *Communities*, 110-11. A natural reading of the inscription—she bestowed this on the *Ioudaioi*, and the synagogue of the *Ioudaioi* honoured her for it—suggests that Tation was not a *Ioudaia*. Trebilco seems certain that she was "a Jewish woman," but his justification (230 n. 34), that the inscription would read differently on the building itself, I find puzzling. For other privately donated synagogues, see Hengel, "Stobi," 162-64; Trebilco, *Communities*, 230 n. 34.

[46] From the vast literature: J. Reynolds and R. Tannenbaum, *Jews and Godfearers at Aphrodisias* (Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1987); Louis H. Feldman, "Proselytes and 'Sympathizers' in the Light of the New Inscription from Aphrodisias," *REJ* 148 (1989): 265-305; Van der Horst, *Ancient Jewish Epitaphs*, 71-72, 135-37; Trebilco, *Communities*, 145-66; M. P. Bonz, "The Jewish Donor Inscriptions from Aphrodisias: Are They Both Third-Century, and Who Are the *theosebeis*?" *HSCP* 96 (1994): 281-99.

[47] T. Rajak and D. Noy, "*Archisynagogoi*: Office, Title and Social Status in the Greco-Jewish Synagogue," *JRS* 83 (1993): 75-93.

[48] This was the view of H. Lietzmann in a brief note (inaccessible to me) mentioned by Hengel, "Stobi," 178.

were already influenced by the Christian tendency of the period to cite "Judaism" as a system, we cannot know. In any case, one could hardly argue on the basis of these two inscriptions, in the absence of literary support, that Ἰουδαϊσμός was an established usage across antiquity approximating our "Judaism" (as system).

II. Searching for Ancient Religion

Given that *Ioudaioi* of the half-millennium spanning the turn of the era did not describe what they did and thought as "Judaism," what language did they use? An obvious clue is provided by those places mentioned above where "Judaism" has been supplied by translators of our texts: "the ancestral [traditions] of the *Ioudaioi*" (τὰ πάτρια τῶν Ἰουδαίων; *Ant*. 20.41) or "the customs of the *Ioudaioi*" (τὰ Ἰουδαίων ἔθη; *Ant*. 20.17, 38, 75, 139). What we find in these passages from Josephus is actually standard terminology—in other literature and in his narratives—for the laws and customs of ethnic groups: their νόμοι, νόμιμα, πάτρια, ἔθη, and combinations of these.

Notice, for example, how Josephus frames his rebuttal of Apion, a writer often described as "anti-Jewish," though Josephus casts him as anti-*Judaean*. The issue is the treatment of one's *ethnos* by members of another, or *foreigners*, not the treatment of one "religion" by another. Josephus claims (*Apion* 2.237) that it is traditional among the Judaeans to preserve their own legal precepts or conventions (νόμιμα) and to refrain from criticizing those of foreign peoples (τῶν ἀλλοτρίων). Of Apion he remarks (2.144):

> Healthy-minded people need steadfastly to maintain their domestic laws concerning piety with precision (τοῖς μὲν οἰκείοις νόμοις περὶ τὴν εὐσέβειαν ἀκριβῶς ἐμμένειν) and not abuse those of others. But he [Apion] shirked his own, and spoke falsely about ours!

Josephus cannot talk about Apion as member of another *religion* because the category did not yet exist.

The concept of *religion*, which is fundamental to our outlook and our historical research, lacked a taxonomical counterpart in antiquity. Whereas we often study Josephus and Judaea within departments devoted to the study of religion, if we try to produce the ancient terms that express this category we come up empty. Jonathan Z. Smith writes: "The term 'reli-

gion' has had a long history, much of it, prior to the sixteenth century, irrelevant to contemporary usage."[49] And Wilfred Cantwell Smith reports, in the context of eastern traditions: "I have not found any formulation of a named religion earlier than the nineteenth century."[50]

This problem is well known in non-western traditions, where scholars often observe that the West has imposed the category of religion upon them, creating a convenient menu of *-isms*—Confucianism, Taoism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism—for the western observer. Fung Yu-Lan pointedly called his work a *History of Chinese Philosophy* (even then clarifying "philosophy"), though he well realized that westerners normally viewed his material as "religion."[51] "Hinduism" furnishes an egregious example of the West's transforming or abstracting a whole culture into a belief system in order to simplify comparison with Western faiths, though "the people involved could have had no use for a term or concept 'Hindu' or 'Hinduism'."[52] I have already mentioned the familiar spectre of Orientalism: the systematization, reification, and indeed creation of a concept called the "Orient," to be explored by outsiders as an object and to give contrastive relief to the "Occident" of the explorers.[53] Whereas these problems are much discussed in connection with the West's conceptualization of the Near and Far East, I am proposing that we misunderstand also the ancient homeland of Judaism and Christianity when we impose the modern category of religion upon it.

I do not mean to say that our western forebears were not *religious*. Rather, I mean this. Modern westerners recognize a category of life called "religion." We know (because we constructed these categories) that Judaism, Islam, and Buddhism are religions, whose representatives may take turns appearing on the religious features of BBC Radio or Canada's Vision TV; they are religions that may be studied in courses on religion, within

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[49] Jonathan Z. Smith, "Religion, Religions, Religious," in *Critical Terms for Religious Studies* (ed. Mark C. Taylor; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 269.

[50] Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion: A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of Mankind* (New York: Macmillan, 1963), 61.

[51] D. Bodde, ed., *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan, 1948), 1-6.

[52] Smith, *Meaning*, 63-64.

[53] Said, *Orientalism*, 3-9; Sardar, *Orientalism*; A. L. Macfie, *Orientalism* (London: Pearson, 2002); I. Davidson and D. J. Penslar, eds., *Orientalism and the Jews* (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 2005).

departments for the study of religion. Since at least the American and French revolutions, this category has been isolable from the rest of our lives: religious systems may be adopted or abandoned. Whereas questions such as "Are you religious?," "What is your religion?," or "What do you think of religion?" are easily intelligible to us, there was no way to frame such questions in the ancient world, which knew no separate category of "religion." The various elements that constitute our religion being inextricably bound up with other aspects of their lives. Walter Burkert could write a magisterial treatise on *Greek Religion*, to be sure, but he had to concede in the introduction: "Ritual and myth are the two forms in which Greek religion presents itself to the historian of religion."[54] That is: two categories that *are ancient* lend themselves to critical study, but we cannot study an ancient category called religion.

When surveys of the Roman world come to speak of "religion," they often observe that no Greek or Latin (or Hebrew or Egyptian; cf. Indian and Chinese, etc.) word corresponds to our category—not even Latin *religio*.[55] After discussing government, the military, architecture, social and family life, such surveys explain that what we seek to understand as religion permeated all of these parts and more of ancient existence, without yet being identifiable with any one of them. James Rives observes: "There instead existed in the Graeco-Roman tradition a variety of modes in which people could think about and interact with the divine world… These overlapped and interacted in various ways, but neither formed an integrated system nor sprang from a unified understanding of the divine."[56] Trying to isolate something approximating religion requires us to juggle mentally at least six different balls, including all the prominent spheres of ancient thinking about human life.

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[54] Burkert, *Greek Religion*, trans. J. Raffan (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985). On animal sacrifice as the essence of ancient ritual, see p. 55.

[55] E.g., A. D. Nock, *Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998 [1933], 10-11); J. A. Shelton, *As the Romans Did* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 360-61; J. E. Stambaugh, *The Roman City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1988), 213-14; M. Beard, J. North, and S. Price, *Religions of Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1:42-54; D. Feeney, *Literature and Religion at Rome: Cultures, Contexts, and Beliefs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1-21; J. Henderson in *The Roman World* (ed. J. Wacher; London: Routledge, 2002), 2:749; M. T. Boatwright, D. J. Gargola, and R. J. A. Talbert, *The Romans: From Village to Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 71-75.

[56] "Flavian Religious Policy and the Jerusalem Temple," in *Flavius Josephus and Flavian Rome* (ed. J. Edmondson, S. Mason, and J. Rives; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005),

1. Centuries before the Hasmonaean revolt, Greek curiosity about the world's inhabitants had already generated a rich ethnographical enterprise, according to which the fundamental groups of the inhabited earth (οἰκουμένη) were the various peoples or nations (ἔθνη, *nationes*—nineteenth-century notions of "nationalism" being of course irrelevant), a terminology that stood in varying relationship to "tribes" (φυλαί, *tribus*). Far from being a term of scientific precision—we should not confuse the etic, social-scientific category of ethnicity, in all its complexity, with ancient usage[57]—ἔθνος could indicate groups of quite different constituency, history, and size, from Athenians to Medians, Libyans and Indians to Spartans.[58] Largely as a result of Herodotus' enormous influence,[59] later writers of diverse ethnic origins (including Strabo and Josephus) employed *ethnos* and its usual companions as an exceptionally robust taxonomy for classifying the social phenomena they saw around them.[60]

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[157]. I was privileged to read the typescript of Rives' *Religion in the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), which develops this principle with abundant examples and trenchant insight. Rives' categories do not precisely match mine, but they confirm the general picture below.

[57] Here I favour the position of D. Konstan, "Defining Ancient Greek Ethnicity," *Diaspora* 6 (1997): 97-110, in critique of J. M. Hall, *Ethnic Identity in Greek Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997): whereas Hall defines ethnicity in terms of common descent, Konstan emphasizes that the ancient term *ethnos* in all its elasticity was a phenomenon of discourse and not of fact. More recently, Hall's *Hellenicity: Between Ethnicity and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 1-29, draws a sharp distinction between ethnicity and culture on similarly etic grounds: genealogically based ethnicity is for him only one variety of "cultural" identity (p. 18). Although in his treatment of "Hellene, Hellas" Hall is very sensitive to the emic / etic distinction, and criticizes J. L. Myres for transgressing it (p. 46), in the case of *ethnos* he seems to straddle both sides of the chasm.

[58] Cf. C. P. Jones, "ἔθνος and γένος in Herodotus," *CQ* 46 (1996): 315-20.

[59] For Herodotus' ethnographical conceptions in historical context, see R. Thomas, *Herodotus in Context: ethnography, science and the art of persuasion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), esp. 102-31; R. V. Munson, *Telling Wonders: Ethnographic and Political Discourse in the Work of Herodotus* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001).

[60] For Josephus' debts to Strabo—and Polybius and Herodotus—see Y. Shahar, *Josephus Geographicus: The Classical Context of Geography in Josephus* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 49-84, 130-73, 190-270. Although there is still a marked tendency (e.g., in Josephus studies) to assume that Hellenization and the Greek language were somehow alien to Judaean thought, such that Josephus dressed his thoughts in Greek or "Hellenized" them as a deliberate process, that assumption seems to me misplaced. Just as modern colonial elites often found the English and French languages full of possibilities for reconceiving their peoples' place in the world, so too a member of the Jerusalem elite such as Josephus appears to have

Each *ethnos* had its distinctive nature or character (φύσις, ἦθος), expressed in unique ancestral traditions (τὰ πάτρια), which typically reflected a shared (if fictive) ancestry (συγγενεία); each had its charter stories (μῦθοι), customs, norms, conventions, mores, laws (νόμοι, ἔθη, νόμιμα), and political arrangements or constitution (πολιτεία).[61] The diversity among ethnic characters was connected with, sometimes directly attributed to (e.g., in the Hippocratic *Airs, Waters, Places*), peculiar environmental conditions; later Platonists would link this diversity with the different characters of the regional deities assigned as guardians to the various ἔθνη (further below). Although political constitutions were understood to be different—and fascination with such difference drove ethnographic inquiry—every *ethnos*, whether governed by a monarch, an aristocracy, or some form of democracy, was assumed to have its leading men (οἱ πρῶτοι, ἄριστοι, ἐπίσημοι, etc.). This cultivated (πεπαιδευμένοι) class, including magistrates and priests, understood the traditions and, under the Roman empire, were responsible to their overlords for internal order. According to both insiders and outsiders, the Ἰουδαῖοι (just like Egyptians, Syrians, Romans, etc.) were an *ethnos* with all of the usual accoutrements (see Part III below).

This fundamental category of ἔθνη with their laws and customs includes important elements of our "religion," in what we separate out as "religious law," customs, and charter myths. In the case of the Judaeans, such laws and customs are often taken by scholars as equivalent to "the Jewish religion." But the political-ethnographic category of ἔθνος cannot simply be identified with "religion."

2. An ancient *ethnos* normally had a national cult (τὰ θεῖα, τὰ ἱερά, θρησκεία, θεῶν θεραπεία, *cura / cultus deorum, ritus, religio*), involving priests, temples, and animal sacrifice. This cannot be isolated from the *ethnos* itself, since temples, priesthood, and cultic practices were part and parcel of a people's founding stories, traditions, and civic structures. There was usually a close connection between the aristocracy and the priesthood, whether the priesthood was itself hereditary and the main base of the elite

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considered the standard Greek categories valuable for his actual thoughts as well as his language. Could he have thought the same thoughts in Aramaic, without Greek?

[61] Cf. S. Saïd, "The Discourse of Identity in Greek Rhetoric from Isocrates to Aristides," in *Ancient Perceptions of Greek Ethnicity* (ed. I. Malkin; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 75.

(as in Egypt, Judaea, and the East) or the elite were expected to assume priestly functions once they acquired sufficient rank, on a rotating basis or for life (as in Greece and Rome). This was a world in which the Roman *princeps*, endowed with a sacred aura by the senate, with the solemn title of *augustus*, was also high priest in the college of *pontifices*; the Judaean high priest was the leading political figure of that state (whether independent or under foreign rule); and Roman senators and military leaders offered sacrifice as part of their duties. The Roman senate could only meet in a consecrated building.

Yet cult and *ethnos* may be distinguished for our purposes, partly because there was no one-for-one match between a people and a single cultic system. The major centres of the world (e.g., Rome, Lugdunum, Carthage, Antioch, Athens, Alexandria, Ephesus, Jerusalem) typically housed their civic cults in prominent sacred precincts (τέμενος, τὸ ἱερόν, *templum*), with a shrine or house (ναός, *aedes*) for the deity in question. But most cities were happy to host a number of cults, the relative importance of which could change over time, and cities also exported their ancestral cults to foreign centres along with their emigrés. Further, alongside the civic cults were quasi-private "mystery" cults,[62] for initiates only (e.g., the followers of Mithras, Cybele, and Isis, or the Eleusinian *mystai*), whether they had stable cultic centres (e.g., Eleusis) or depended upon itinerant charismatic adepts (e.g., Dionysus, Cybele).

The dispersed Judaean communities did not for the most part[63] take their cultic apparatus with them, restricting its use to the mother-city Jerusalem. Although Judaeans abroad regularly contributed to the maintenance of the Jerusalem cult and were expected to visit the metropolis for festivals whenever possible, travel conditions normally precluded this. As a result, the main communities of the Judaean *ethnos* in Asia Minor, Hellas, and Italy had no visible cultic expression. Nevertheless, representatives of

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[62] E.g., W. Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987).

[63] In addition to the famous Judaean temple in Leontopolis, there is some slight evidence that other diaspora communities may have offered at least the Passover sacrifice (Philo, *Spec.* 2.145-146; *Ant.* 14.244-246, 257-258, 260), on which see F. M. Colautti, *Passover in the Works of Josephus* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 232; E. S. Gruen, *Diaspora: Jews amidst Greeks and Romans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 117. Colautti argues (153-241) that Josephus was among those after 70 who tried to continue the Passover sacrifice in Rome (cf. *Ant.* 2.313).

these communities (e.g., Philo and Josephus) wrote a good deal about the Jerusalem-based cult, even decades after the temple's removal, continually reinforcing the bond between their *ethnos* and the ancestral land.

Paradoxically, whereas the sacrificial cult was the ancient category that most conspicuously involved "religious" language, with respect to consecration, purity, and attendance upon the Gods, it is probably the one most alien to modern conceptions of religion.

3. The other side of the same paradox is that a category least likely to be connected with religion in our world, philosophy, was in its ancient form rather close to our religion. At least, many basic elements of Western religion—a voluntary system of belief concerning ultimate things, especially the divine, matched by a regimen of practice ordering the life of the disciple, based in the study of authoritative written texts, and promoting clear ethical norms—and even more obviously on Samuel Johnson's definition of religion ("Virtue, as founded upon reverence of God, and expectations of future rewards and punishments"),[64] were to be found in ancient *philosophia*. Philosophers were the ones most likely to issue a call to virtue and uprightness (or "righteousness"), denouncing the destructive power of worldly attractions (cf. Lucian, *Nigrinus*).[65] It was philosophy that hosted discussions about the nature of the divine and human responsibility or ethics. Philosophy encouraged one to ponder life's meaning, the existence of the soul, and the afterlife, and to behave in accord with this reflection, facing suffering and death with equanimity.[66] That is why Philo (*Prob.* 75-91, esp. 88; *ap.* Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 8.11; *Vit. cont.* 2, 16) and Josephus (*War* 2.119, 166; *Ant.* 13.171-173; 18.12) describe groups that *we* incline to consider religious—Essenes, Therapeutae, Pharisees, and Sadducees—as *philosophers*. This was no deceit: they were using the most appropriate category. "Religion" was not in the lexicon.

4. Other salient aspects of what religion provides for us—rites of passage at birth, marriage, and death, primary education in the laws and the founding stories of the (sub-) culture, consecration of food, formal commemoration of the departed—in antiquity came from familial traditions. Among the Romans, domestic worship encompassed veneration of both ancestors

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[64] *Dictionary of the English Language*, 1755, *s. v.*

[65] Still basic is Nock, *Conversion*, 14, 164-86.

[66] On the political consequences of philosophy, which invite comparison with the predicaments of some Christians, see R. Macmullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order: Treason, Unrest, and Alienation in the Empire* (London: Routledge, 1966), 1-94.

and the family's protective deities. In Judaea and possibly elsewhere, Passover sacrifices were consumed by families.

5. Still other elements of what we find in church, synagogue, or mosque were to be found in ancient "voluntary associations" (*collegia*, θίασοι). These too have been widely discussed in recent scholarship, and not least because of their potential to illuminate aspects of our "religion."[67] Some associations were cultic, comprising devotees of a particular deity; others were for members of trade guilds; others were social and drinking clubs. Whatever their specific purposes, *collegia* tended to have regular celebratory meals involving sacrifice to the patron deity, and to mark at least some rites of passage for members, notably funerals. Although they included important elements our religion, again *collegia* did not come close to matching the whole conception in our world.

6. Two other ancient categories that included elements of our religion were astrology and magic,[68] both of which were associated with the expertise of Chaldaeans and Magi from Babylonia and Persia. Astrology flourishes today, of course, and retains connections with religion even now—largely displacing "organized religion" in some bookshops—whereas magic has become for us the domain of deception and sleight-of-hand, rather than the application of spells believed to be efficacious, as it was in antiquity. Both categories dealt with some of the same questions concerning ultimate reality and fate, therefore with the problem of causation and the meaning of human life, which were taken up in philosophy from a different perspective. Magic involved prayer, and its formulas often included the names of deities (frequently garbled); prominent among these was Yahweh (or Adonai). Origen was well aware of this phenomenon. In supporting the antiquity of Judaean tradition against the philosopher Celsus, he asserted that *many* nations recognized the ancient figures Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as Israel's founders (*C. Cels.* 4.33):

> Their names are so powerful when linked with the name of God that the formula "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" is

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[67] E.g., P. A. Harland, *Associations, Synagogues, and Congregations: Claiming a Place in Ancient Mediterranean Society* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003) and the essays in J. S. Kloppenborg and S. G. Wilson, eds., *Voluntary Associations in the Graeco-Roman World* (London: Routledge, 1996).

[68] E.g., Macmullen, *Enemies*, 95-162; on religious aspects of magic, F. Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World* (trans. F. Philip; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 215-22.

used not only by members of the Judaean *ethnos* in their prayers to God and when they exorcise demons, but also by *almost all those who deal in magic and spells*. For in magical treatises it is often to be found that God is invoked by this formula...

Since they trafficked in ultimate powers, astrology and magic must be included among the religious aspects of antiquity, though again they were not comprehensive enough to provide an equivalent to modern religion.

These are only the larger rooms in which we might look for religion in Graeco-Roman antiquity. A more exhaustive survey would take us through political and military cultures, educational and athletic institutions, and large-scale public entertainments, including tragic performances based on ancient myths, all of which included sacrifice and attention to the deity. What we would recognize as "religious" activities were everywhere, but there was no phenomenon understood as "religion."

In the previous section we observed that by the fourth century Christians had established *Iudaismus* and *Christianismus* as formally contrastable systems. Were these putative belief systems, then, not getting close to "religions" as we understand them? They were getting close.[69] But with the triumph of Christianity in the West, the proscription of paganism, and the Church's increasing involvement in state organs, Christian elements rapidly began to fill the spaces formerly occupied by Roman cults, civic leadership bodies, and philosophical schools. This led to a new integration of civic life, belief, and worship, for a millennium or so—with the much-maligned Jews left decidedly on the fringes, ultimately forced to convert or to leave many Christian states. Of the term *religio* in this context, W. C. Smith observes:

Early Western civilization was on the verge, at the time of Lactantius [d. ca. 325 C.E.], of taking a decisive step in the formulation of an elaborate, comprehensive, philosophic concept of *religio*. However, it did not take it. The matter was virtually dropped, to lie dormant for a thousand years.[70]

It is only western modernity that knows this category of religion.

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[69] For Christianity as in essence a new form of "religion," see Rives, "Christian Expansion," 32-33, 36-38, 41.

[70] Smith, *Meaning*, 28. See further Peter Harrison, *'Religion' and Religions in the English Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 1, arguing that the Enlightenment created the concept.

III. Searching for Ancient Jews

In the absence of either "religion" or "Judaism," I have argued, the *Ioudaioi* / *Iudaei* of Graeco-Roman antiquity understood themselves, and were understood by outsiders, as an ἔθνος, a people comparable to and contrastable with other ἔθνη. It remains to elaborate this point and to draw consequences from it for historical work.

In form, Ἰουδαῖος is cognate to Ἰουδαία and indicates a "person of Judaea": a Judaean. It bears precisely the same relationship to the name of the homeland that Ἄραψ, Βαβυλώνιος, Αἰγύπτιος, Σύρος, Παρθυαῖος, and Ἀθηναῖος have to the names of their respective homelands. If one asked where a Babylonian or Egyptian or Syrian or Parthian was from, in what laws and customs they had been educated, the answer was apparent in their ethnic label. That was also the case with Ἰουδαῖος (= of Ἰουδαία), which should therefore be translated "Judaean" by analogy. A hypothetically equivalent question today, "Where are Jews from?" would not admit of a straightforward answer, because, although the name originates with יהודים, Ἰουδαῖοι, and *Iudaei*, the changes that produced our English word have removed any immediate association with a place (as have *die Juden, les juifs*, or modern Hebrew יהודים).[71] Even in Israel many Jews consider themselves to be "from" Poland, Russia, Yemen, or Iraq, and some preserve Ashkenazi or Sephardi traditions in dress, diet, outlook, and speech. Since 1948 it has been possible for Jews also to be "from Israel," but the ethnicon that corresponds to this homeland is "Israeli," not "Jew." Since the modern English "Jew" does not mean "of Judaea" as *Ioudaios* did, the ancient term is more faithfully rendered "Judaean."

Decisive for this question is not form, but actual usage: the universal tendency of ancient non-Christian authors to discuss the Ἰουδαῖοι alongside other ἔθνη. *Ioudaioi* were not often compared—as the Christians *were* compared (Celsus in *C. Cels.* 1.9, 68)—with members of cults (e.g., of Mithras, Cybele, Isis) or voluntary associations.

Strabo, for example (16.2.2), writes: "Some divide Syria as a whole into Coele-Syrians and Syrians and Phoenicians, and say that four other nations (ἔθνη) are mixed up with these: Judaeans, Idumaeans, Gazaeans, and Azotians…" Although he distinguishes the philosopher-astrologers known as Chaldaeans from the tribe of the same name living in Chaldaea (16.1.6), Strabo sees no need for such a distinction in the case of Judaeans: they

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Cohen, *Beginnings*, 69.

constitute an ἔθνος parallel to other ἔθνη. So also 16.2.34-36: Judaea as a whole (including Galilee and Samaria) is home to peoples of mixed stock (οἰκούμενα μικτῶν ἔκ τε Αἰγυπτίων ἐθνῶν καὶ ᾿Αραβίων καὶ Φοινίκων); the ancestors of those called Judaeans are believed to be Egyptians. Moses, though an Egyptian priest, rejected *Egyptian, Libyan*, and *Greek* modes of representing the deity, and so took a number of reflective men with him to establish a different kind of rule (ἀρχή) and piety in Judaea. Though governed by tyrants, he says, the Judaeans revered their acropolis (*scil*. the temple mount in Jerusalem) as a holy place.

Note especially Strabo's next paragraphs. This reverence for the seat and origin of government, he says (16.2.38):

> is common among both Greeks and barbarians. For, being *polis*-connected (πολιτικοί), they live under a common constitutional order (πρόσταγμα); otherwise, it would be impossible for vast numbers to act together harmoniously with one another, which is just what it means to πολιτεύεσθαι.

Strabo mentions two other ἔθνη that have likewise preserved the divine origins of their constitutions: Cretans and Spartans (16.2.38). For him and his audiences, to be a Judaean was comparable to belonging to any other *ethnos*. Just as being an Egyptian or a Libyan or a Greek was *not simply a matter of geography* or of education or of "religion," so being a Judaean could not be limited in any such way. It meant representing an entire local culture (no matter where one currently lived).

Posidonius, used as a source by Strabo, must have employed similar language. In a fragment preserved via Diodorus of Tarsus and then Photius (*Bibl*. 244), he speaks of the Judaeans as the only *ethnos* of all (μόνους ἁπάντων ἐθνῶν) who were unwilling to join in Antiochus IV's commonality initiative (ἀκοινωνήτους εἶναι), which involved mixing *with every other ethnos* (τῆς πρὸς ἄλλο ἔθνος ἐπιμιξίας); they rather assumed a hostile stance toward all (πολεμίους ὑπολαμβάνειν πάντας). Such characterizations pervade ancient Greek and Latin literature, as a perusal of Stern's *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* would show.

Philo offers abundant material in this vein:[72] the Judaeans are an *ethnos* (*Mos*. 1.7, 34; *Dec*. 97; *Spec*. 2.163, 166; 4.179, 224; *Virt*. 212, 226;

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[72] Cf. E. Birnbaum, *The Place of Judaism in Philo's Thought: Israel, Jews, and Proselytes* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1996), 50-8. Birnbaum also explores "Israel" as an internal designation, a term that merits further exploration across the board.

Prob. 75), whose *lawgiver* Moses (*Mos.* 1.1; *Prob.* 43, 57, 68) gave them a *constitution* (*Virt.* 108). "The Judaeans were foreigners (ξένοι), as I said before, the founders of the *ethnos*—on account of famine, through lack of food—having migrated to Egypt from Babylon and the upper satrapies" (*Mos.* 1.34). The translation of the Greek Bible is presented by Philo as an inter-state matter: the rendering of foreign laws into Greek through diplomatic missions (*Mos.* 2.31-33). Precisely as an *ethnos*, the *Ioudaioi* are in constant tension with Alexandrians and Egyptians (NB: *not* with followers of Isis, or Stoics) over the issue of civic and political status (*Flacc.* 1, 21, 43, 191; *Leg.* 117, 170, 178, 194, 210). The *Essaioi*, a small subset of the populous Judaean *ethnos*, may be compared with the Magi among the Persians or the gymnosophists among the Indians (*Prob.* 74-75).

Particularly telling is Philo's language in connection with what *we* normally describe as "religious conversion" (*Virt.* 102-103):[73]

> Having legislated for fellow-members of the *ethnos* (περὶ τῶν ὁμοεθνῶν), he [Moses] holds that newcomers must be deemed worthy of every privilege, because *they have left behind blood-relatives, ancestral home, customs, sacred rites* (γενεὰν μὲν τὴν ἀφ᾽ αἵματος καὶ πατρίδα καὶ ἔθη καὶ ἱερά… ἀπολελοιπότας), *images of the Gods, the gifts and honours too…* He directs those of the *ethnos* to love the newcomers, not only as friends and relatives, but as though themselves in body and soul.

Philo's language includes the whole range of ethnic associations, from land, kin, and custom to the cult and its associated phenomena. Shocking though it may seem, we consistently find both *Ioudaioi* and outsiders understanding "conversion" as in fact a movement from one *ethnos* to another, a kind of change in citizenship (further below). There was no "religion" to which one might convert, even if one had wished to do so: taking on the Judaeans' laws and customs was different from, and more than, being initiated in the cult of Cybele or joining a philosophical school, notwithstanding parallels to both. It was a change of ethnic-ancestral culture, the joining of another people, as it had been already in the biblical paradigm, Ruth (1:16): "your people shall be my people."

Josephus is important because he consciously undertakes to explain Judaean history, laws, and customs to apparently receptive audiences in

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[73] So Cohen (*Beginnings*, 130) on this passage: "Philo clearly describes conversion *in theological terms*" (emphasis added).

Rome. His *Judaean War* presents the *Ioudaioi* as an *ethnos*, caught up in the sort of crisis long familiar to Romans and Greeks; hence the strong influences in this work from Thucydides, Xenophon, the Athenian orators, Polybius, and Strabo. The Judaean civil war that caused the conflict (*War* 1.9-10), he explains, nourished itself on an age-old struggle to define freedom and autonomy in the context of foreign domination.[74] Though these questions were delicately managed in Judaea most of the time by the hereditary aristocracy (as in the rest of the Greek East), even under the severe stresses of Roman administrative incompetence, things fell apart with the murder by unworthy demagogues and their gangs of the most distinguished leaders (4.314-333; 7.267).

If the *War* presupposes a Roman audience with significant interest in post-war Judaea, the much longer *Judaean Antiquities* claims to be written in response to demands for a readable translation of the Judaean constitution (πολιτεία): its legal provisions, traditions, and the national history (*Ant.* 1.5, 10; 3.322; 4.45, 184, 191-198, 302, 310-312; 20.229, 251, 261; *Apion* 2.287). Near the end (*Ant.* 18-20) Josephus both undertakes a vigorous critique of the current Roman system of government, which he pegs to an elaborate account of Caligula's death and Claudius' accession, and shows the great appeal of the Judaean code to foreign rulers. All of this remains at the level of political discussion and comparison of *ethne*, as we have come to expect. These were Josephus' categories, strongly tinged with philosophy and cult; one cannot extract "religion" from this without tearing up his narrative fabric.

Josephus' most concentrated discussion of the character of the *Ioudaioi* comes in the work known as *Against Apion*. There he regularly juxtaposes Judaeans with Babylonians, Egyptians, Chaldaeans, Athenians, and Spartans. Each of these peoples has a homeland, a lawgiver and laws, ancestral customs, sacred texts, priests and aristocrats, and a citizenship; so they may readily be contrasted and compared. He opens with a dismissal of Greek claims to superiority in history (*Apion* 1.6), asserting that the Egyptians, Chaldaeans, and Phoenicians—he declines for the moment, he says, to include Judaeans—have the most reliable records of the past (1.8-9). This kind of ethnic comparison continues throughout. Notice, for example, Apion's reported wonder that Ἰουδαῖοι could be called Alexandrians (Ἀλεξανδρεῖς); this makes sense only on Apion's assumption that these are

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[74] E.g., *War* 2.22, 54, 80, 260, 264, 295, 300, 346, 348-349, 355-361; 4.320, 335, 358, 408; 5.28, 389, 396, 406; 6.215; 7.255, 325-329, 344, 351, 370, 372, 386, 410.

parallel, and mutually exclusive, terms. Josephus' response confirms that the assumption is shared. Rather than suggesting that Apion has confused categories, that being a *Ioudaios* is actually a "religious" matter or the like, he accepts the ethnic character of these labels but accuses Apion of not looking hard enough for parallel cases of "dual nationality" (so to speak): the Antiochenes, Ephesians, and Romans are among those who extend their citizenship also to those from foreign ἔθνη (2.38-41). So it is in Alexandria, he claims, where Ἰουδαῖοι have equal rights. There are parallels here with modern discussions of identity in relation to immigrant groups: "Indo-Canadian" or "Chinese-Canadian." Yet admitting the complexities of such terms does not cause us to fall back upon "religion" or some other category for the non-Canadian half of the expression. Similar complications should also be manageable in our study of the ancient "Judaeans."

The final quarter of the *Apion*, an extended panegyric on the Judaean constitution, is thick with parallels between Ἰουδαῖοι and other nations, their laws and legislators (*Apion* 2.160-163, 168-170, 172, 223-235, 239-270, 276-278, 281-286). Josephus and his audiences, as also his literary interlocutors, assumed that the Judaeans were an *ethnos*—and this more than two decades after the fall of Jerusalem to Titus.

Some scholars, while conceding at least parts of this kind of analysis, have suggested nevertheless that at some point the conditions constituting the Judaeans as an *ethnos* changed—their corporate identity was severed from considerations of land or state—and that after that point Ἰουδαῖος should, or sometimes should, be translated "Jew," given the word's new "religious" meaning.

Daniel R. Schwartz argues in one study that the development of the Ἰουδαῖοι from *ethnos* to religion began already with the Babylonian exile and was reinforced at several subsequent watersheds—Hellenization, the rise of sectarianism, Roman annexation of Judaea, and the destruction of the temple—each of which widened the gap between what had once been joined together: worship of the Judaean God and governance of the homeland.[75] The problem with this proposal is that every ancient *ethnos* experienced its own vicissitudes through the centuries from Alexander the Great to the Severans, say, without thereby altering its character as an *ethnos*. Cities in Hellas and Asia were destroyed or passed from native rulers to the Romans, but if the people survived they retained their ethnic identity.

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[75] *Studies in the Jewish Background of Christianity* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1992), 5-15.

Every city or region under Roman rule faced the problem of maintaining its ancestral constitution under the domination of this foreign overlord, as the Judaeans did, though they did not cease to be ἔθνη for that reason, and we do not translate their names differently because of this struggle.[76] Even in the capital, Roman rule and citizenship became gradually disconnected from residence in the city, offered to ever wider groups, without *Romanitas* thereby becoming a "religion." The meaning of "Roman," "Greek," and "Egyptian," to name a few, certainly becomes increasingly complicated over the centuries, but we do not abandon their traditional names for that reason. Why change "Judaean," when the conceptual framework that gave the word meaning remained fully functioning, and there was no other ancient word to replace it?

Shaye Cohen has located the crucial conditions of change from *ethnos* to religion in the Hasmonean period, in the mass conversions of the neighbouring ἔθνη (Idumaeans and Ituraeans) to Judaean citizenship (πολιτεία). In his view, such conversion meant the end in principle of the exclusively *ethnic-geographical* meaning of Ἰουδαῖοι that had obtained until then.[77] He insightfully proposes that the Hasmoneans were modelling themselves on the Achaean League, a largely voluntary but partly compelled association of neighbouring peoples living under one set of laws, way of life, piety, and so on.[78] A secondary effect of this political change (i.e., of "Judaism" now as a matter of *citizenship* rather than of *ethnos*) was a religious one: in the same period we begin to find stories of individual gentiles believing in the God of the Jews and so undergoing "religious" conversion.[79] In the process, Cohen proposes, just as the meaning of "Hellene" changed to become a *cultural* term—it "was completely sundered from any connection with the land or people of Greece"[80]—, so also Ἰουδαῖοι became largely cultural (= *religious*): "Conversion to Judaism thus emerges as an analogue to conversion to Hellenism."

But "Hellenism" (Ἑλληνισμός) represented neither a culture nor a religion at this time (see Part I), and in the ostensibly parallel case of Ἰουδαῖος,

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[76] Many of the debates preserved by Polybius concerned this issue (cf. A. M. Eckstein, *Moral Vision in the Histories of Polybius* [Berkeley: University of California Press], 194-236), which is still a central theme in Plutarch's works, especially *Precepts of Statecraft* (*Praecepta gerendae reipublicae, Mor*. 798a-825f).

[77] Cohen, *Beginnings*, 70, 81, 90.

[78] Cohen, *Beginnings*, 125-29.

[79] Cohen, *Beginnings*, 137.

[80] Cohen, *Beginnings*, 134.

Cohen does not justify the slide from "cultural" (by putative analogy with "Hellene") to "religious" (a category he does not apply to "Hellene")**:**[81] "the Hasmonean period attests for the first time the idea of religious conversion: by believing in the God of the Jews and following his laws, a gentile can become a Jew."[82] Cohen does not show what ancient category this religious conversion fits into; two of his chief supports are the Christians Paul and Origen, though as we have seen they have a separate discourse.[83] Although he wishes to argue that Ἰουδαῖος from this period onward should often be rendered "Jew," he does not say why this should be so if (a), as he concedes, the newer senses do not supplant (but only supplement) the enduring ethnic meaning, and (b) the analogue *Hellene* does not undergo a change of translation, but still means "Greek" with all of its complicated meanings in play (indeed, the ethnic-geographic sense of *Hellene* remains crucial throughout the "Second Sophistic" at least);[84] the analogy breaks down if "Hellene" does not become a *religious* term[85] as Ἰουδαῖος is said to do. Why change the translation of *Ioudaios* alone?

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[81] E.g., Cohen, *Beginnings*, 136: "But by investing Judaean identity with political or cultural (religious) content, the Hasmoneans were able to give outsiders an opportunity to attain membership in Judaean society"; cf. 70, 79, 81.

[82] Cohen, *Beginnings*, 137.

[83] Cohen, *Beginnings*, 134. Paul should not be taken as representative of Judaean views. Outside of Romans, from which the passage in question comes (Rom 2:28), he shows no interest in being seen as a *Ioudaios*, and his appeal here that being a *Ioudaios* is internal or spiritual only serves his rhetorical needs in this letter (cf. S. Mason, "'For I am Not Ashamed of the Gospel': The Gospel and the First Readers of Romans," in *Gospel in Paul: Studies on Corinthians, Galatians and Romans for Richard N. Longenecker* [ed. L. Ann Jervis and P. Richardson; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994], 254-87). And Origen, as it happens, still often speaks of the Judaeans as an *ethnos* (*C. Cels.* 1.14, 55; 2.8).

[84] Cf. Dio's speech to the Rhodians. From a large and growing literature: E. Bowie, "The Greeks and their Past in the Second Sophistic," *Past and Present* 46 (1970): 3-41; S. Swain, *Hellenism and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). Josephus' comment about the "native" or "genuine" (γνήσιοι) Greeks at *War* 1.16 is part of this discourse. Julian's fourth-century letter to the senate and people of Athens still depends heavily on their ethnic continuity.

[85] G. W. Bowersock, *Hellenism in Late Antiquity* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), 9-12, indeed charts a change in the meaning of Hellene / Hellenism, but this is part of the same process we have described in Part I, in connection with an ascendant *Christianismos*. Hall, *Hellenicity*, argues that Hellenic identity first emerged in the sixth century on an ethnic basis (with fictive kingship, pp. 125-71), and that it was redefined in the fifth and fourth centuries as a cultural matter (172-228). But the historical conditions of these changes (a Thessalian motive to unite and dominate, then Athenian supremacy in

In a recent study Daniel Schwartz argues that outside observers changed their understanding of what *Ioudaios* meant after 70 C.E., as they began to call *Iudaea* by other names, and that Josephus' works mirror this development: the *War* using *Ioudaios* with standard ethnic connotations, the *Antiquities* linking it with "religious" terms and concepts (such as νόμιμα).[86] Yet Schwartz's evidence for outsiders' descriptions of Judaea depends heavily upon the literary licence of the Flavian poets: when they called the region "Idumaea" they were not reflecting a change in their perception. Well before 70, other poets such as Virgil (*Georg.* 3.12) and Lucan (*Phars.* 3.216) could substitute Idumaea for Judaea,[87] and even Philo could call the region "Palestinian Syria" (*Prob.* 75); Louis Feldman has shown that the name *Iudaea* persevered for centuries after Hadrian's attempt to separate the *ethnos* from its ancestral city.[88] As for Josephus, Schwartz perhaps misreads the change of theme from *War* to the *Antiquities*, so that νόμιμα (legal matters / precepts) and ἔθη (customs) become for him *religious* terms. This is all standard political and ethnic language, as we have seen and as Josephus' very last composition (*Apion*), left out of account by Schwartz, makes clear through its ongoing comparison of constitutions, lawgivers, laws, and customs.

The variety of these—mutually exclusive—arguments for a change (or incremental changes) from ethnic-geographic to religious meanings of *Ioudaios*, over several centuries, inspire doubt that there *was* such a change in antiquity, of sufficient distinction that it calls for a new translation of *Ioudaios*—even for "political" and "religious" translations of the same word within a single passage of text.[89] The same Greek and Latin ethnica (*Ioudaios, Iudaeus*) remained in use: when much later Greek truly needed a different word for "Jews" it turned to Εβραίοι;[90] there was no need for a new name in antiquity.

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a more broadly disseminated culture) have no analogy in Judaea; and the date of this shift seems too early to support Cohen's analogy.

[86] "Herodians and *Ioudaioi* in Flavian Rome," in *Flavius Josephus and Flavian Rome* (ed. J. Edmondson, S. Mason, and J. Rives; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 63-78, esp. 68-78.

[87] Cf. M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences, 1976), 1.316 and n. 1.

[88] "Some Observations on the Name of Palestine," *HUCA* 61 (1996): 1-23.

[89] E.g., Cohen, *Beginnings*, 90.

[90] I am indebted to a Thomas W. Gallant of York University, in private communication, for confirmation of modern Greek usage.

A further consideration, neglected in these discussions as far as I can see, is the fundamental and repeated criticism of the Christians by Celsus (*C. Cels.* 2.1, 3) and Julian (*C. Gal.* 43a), long after any of the dates proposed for "the change." These philosophers charge that precisely because the Christians have broken with the established ethnic-ancestral tradition of the *Ioudaioi*, they have become an anomalous group: "Since the Christians have forsaken their traditional laws *and are not an individual ethnos like the Judaeans*," Origen complains in response, "they are to be criticized for agreeing to the teachings of Jesus" (*C. Cels.* 5.35). The claim would make little sense if Celsus and Julian considered the *Ioudaioi* no longer an *ethnos* at their times of writing. Indeed, all the non-Christian observers of the *Ioudaioi* we know about continue to understand them as a living *ethnos*.

Basic to the philosopher Celsus' image of the world was the notion that each nation follows its peculiar laws and customs. This was not only because different groups have different values and customs, as in traditional ethnography, but also because various "overseers" are set over the nations from the beginning. Each nation's practices are right when they are done in the way that pleases the overseer, but "it is impious to abandon the customs that have existed in each locality from the beginning" (*C. Cels.* 5.25).

So, he writes in the latter half of the second century C.E.:

> The *Ioudaioi*, having become an individual *ethnos* [after leaving Egypt], enacted laws in keeping with their local conditions, and *carefully maintain them until even now*. In *preserving their worship*—which, whatever its actual form, *is ancestral*—they act just *like other people*: each takes great care with its own ancestral traditions, no matter what they are, if they happen to be established (Ἰουδαῖοι μὲν οὖν ἔθνος ἴδιον γενόμενοι καὶ κατὰ τὸ ἐπιχώριον νόμους θέμενοι καὶ τούτους ἐν σφίσιν ἔτι νῦν περιστέλλοντες καὶ θρησκείαν ὁποίαν δή, πάτριον δ᾽ οὖν, φυλάσσοντες ὅμοια τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀνθρώποις δρῶσιν, ὅτι ἕκαστοι τὰ πάτρια, ὁποῖά ποτ᾽ ἂν τύχῃ καθεστηκότα, περιέπουσι). (*C. Cels.* 5.25)

Although he often disparaged the *Ioudaioi* as derivative from Egypt and among the least accomplished of ἔθνη, Celsus did not hesitate to include them as an *ethnos*. Indeed, he made his criticisms by contrasting *Ioudaioi* with other ἔθνη: just as Athenians, Egyptians, Arcadians, Phrygians, and the others put forward stories of their glorious beginnings, so too did the *Ioudaioi*—though in a naively inferior way (*C. Cels.* 4.36; cf. esp. 1.14).

There is no hint here of any change in the perception of *Ioudaioi* as *ethnos* a century after the fall of Jerusalem.

Writing from the same Platonic tradition in the third century, Porphyry fully acknowledges the horrors that have befallen the *Ioudaioi*, from their insufferable treatment under Antiochus to the fall of Jerusalem and their exclusion from it under the Romans (*Abst.* 4.11), and yet none of this prevents him from considering them a living ἔθνος even now (ἔτι καὶ νῦν). It is impressive that, although Porphyry will devote his comments on the practices of the Judaeans almost entirely to the Essenes, he enfolds this group in the cover of the Judaeans. Why? This part of his work is about ἔθνη—cf. *Abst.* 4.5: "now turning to the other ἔθνη"—and the *Ioudaioi* are the appropriate sequel to Spartans and Egyptians (*Abst.* 4.1-10) in a survey of peoples who lead disciplined lives. The *Ioudaioi* are, in his mind and for his audiences, obviously a functioning *ethnos*, notwithstanding the idealizing character of this work.

In the mid-fourth century, even Julian remains clear on this point. His whole critique of the Christians ("Galilaeans") rests on the view, well established by now, that every *ethnos* has its own character (φύσις, ἦθος: Celts and *Germani* are fierce, Egyptians intelligent, Syrians unwarlike and delicate), partly determined by its physical environment (*C. Gal.* 143d-e), which character is also reflected in its ancestral laws, constitution, and customs (νόμοι, νόμιμα, τὰ πολιτικά ; *C. Gal.* 116a-b, 131b-c). The ethnic character is suited to, and granted by, the national God (*C. Gal.* 143a): "the ἔθνη, being administered by them, follow each domestic God according to its essential character" (*C. Gal.* 115d-e). In Julian's analysis the Christians are blameworthy, first, because they preferred the isolationist Judaean *ethnos* to those of the Greek mainstream, from which most Christians originated and, second, because they *did not even remain* with Judaean laws and customs, but went their own way (ἰδίαν ὁδὸν ἐτράποντο), rendering themselves neither fish nor fowl: they do not belong to any national tradition (*C. Gal.* 42e-43b). What Tertullian had tried to render a virtue—the unique form of Christian corporate identity—made them incomprehensible in Julian's traditional categories. The plan of his argument is first to show the inferiority of the Judaean tradition and then to demonstrate that, nevertheless, it is a far better option than the Christians' abandonment of all ethnic traditions: those of their homelands and those of Judaea. And his main criticism of the Hebrews-Judaeans is that they have confused their local or national God with the Supreme Being (*C. Gal.* 141c-d). The resulting view that their God is jealous of other deities (*C. Gal.* 155c-161a)

has prevented them from recognizing the Gods of other nations, making them "atheists." This (τὴν ἀθεότητα; *C. Gal.* 43b) is the only quality that the Christians have taken from them, not the Judaean virtues related to discipline (*C. Gal.* 238c).

Throughout this discussion Julian resorts often to other ἔθνη, their laws and lawgivers, for comparanda. So he urges: contrast the mildness and openness of Lycurgus, Solon, or the Romans (*C. Gal.* 168b-c, 171d). Or again, how can the Judaeans claim to be so favoured by their God, when the Egyptians, Chaldaeans, Assyrians, and Greeks can boast of so much more success (*C. Gal.* 176a-c)? In particular, he contrasts the grandeur and success of Rome, which has nonetheless never claimed exclusive truth for itself, with the enslavement and poverty of Judaea (*C. Gal.* 193c-194d, 209-210). Julian's essay often reads like a negative print of Josephus' *Apion*: the categories—of ethnic comparison—are the same, reflecting abiding agreement on these assumptions over several centuries. Only the value judgments differ. But this confirms that, outside of the Christian circles to which Julian was so relentlessly hostile, the Judaeans were still seen as one ἔθνος among many (*C. Gal.* 306b):

> The Judaeans agree with the [other] ἔθνη, except in supposing that there is only one God. That is their peculiar thing, alien to us, because all other matters are in common with us: sanctuaries, sacred spaces, sacrificial altars, purifications, and certain observances, concerning which we [and the Judaeans] differ from one another either not at all or only trivially.

Julian's encouragement of the Judaean "patriarchs and chiefs" to restore the cult, "sacrificing according to the ancient manner" (τὸν παλαίον τρόπον θύοντας) in a rebuilt Jerusalem and temple (so Sozomen 5.22; Theodoret 3.15), was evidently tied up with his larger effort to restore temples and sacrifice in the face of Christian encroachment, according to the old ways. Again, he criticizes the Christians for having abandoned any ethnic roots and so for rejecting these traditional behaviours (cf. *C. Gal.* 343c-d, 346e-347c; *Ep.* 20.453; 41.436c-d).

We would like to know more about how Judaeans in the long period from 100 to 400 C.E.—the same interval that separates us from the early eighteenth century—viewed all of this, but a problem with the evidence must be squarely faced. Christian authorities of the mediaeval period decided which ancient works would be copied in their *scriptoria* for posterity, and most of them believed that Judaean culture had lost its vitality

with the coming of Jesus and the condign punishment of Jerusalem's fall. Accordingly, our evidence for the first half-millennium of the Christian era has a peculiar cast. For relations among Christians, Judaeans, and "pagans" we have bookshelves full of Church Fathers and precious little else. Greek-language Judaean texts, which engaged the outside world and interpreted Judaean life in that context, were preserved until the fall of Jerusalem—the one who described this event becoming quasi-canonical—but fell off completely with Josephus' death. If such authors continued to appear thereafter, as seems antecedently likely, they suffered the same fate as Paul's opponents, Judaizers, "gnostics," Marcionites, Montanists, and all others considered beyond the Christian pale. The Christians borrowed from the Romans a historiography based on authority—rather than disinterested investigation of what happened—and so, once they had recognized an authoritative text for an issue or period, its competitors usually fell away: the case of Josephus' rival Justus of Tiberias (Josephus, *Life* 336-367) is instructive.[91] Every Graeco-Roman intellectual who wrote about the Christians is known exclusively from the authoritative rebuttals of the Fathers: their own work was not copied by Christian scribes. Among Judaeans, only intramural writings in Hebrew and Aramaic endured within the community (though still edited by medieval censors).

We have every reason, however, to suppose that Graeco-Judaean writers continued to appear after Josephus' death and continued to see themselves in the same ethnic terms as Josephus employs. This evidence ranges from the general—the ongoing appeal of Judaean law and custom to outsiders,

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[91] Although even Josephus credits him with literary talent (*Life* 40-41, 340), Justus found no real uptake among Christian authors, because he had lost the competition for status. Eusebius' adoption of Josephus' critique of Justus without quibble (*Hist. eccl.* 3.10.8) shows that the contest had since been settled. The ninth-century Byzantine Patriarch Photius claims to have read Justus, but he repeats with enthusiasm Josephus' dismissal of the contender: "And *they say* that the history which that man [Justus] wrote happens to be mostly fabricated, especially in what concerned the Roman war against the Jews and the capture of Jerusalem" (*Bibl.* 33; emphasis added). "They" are Josephus, and this verdict from Photius may have sealed Justus' posthumous fate. By the time of the *Suda Lexicon* in the following century, the entry on Justus depends entirely on Josephus: "[Justus] took it upon himself to compile [this is Josephus' language: *Life* 40, 338] a Judean history and write up certain commentaries, but Josephus exposes this fellow as a fraud—he was writing history in the same period as Josephus." In winning the fathers' confidence, Josephus displaced all other evidence. *A fortiori*, the dominance of the Church Fathers' analysis must have dramatically reduced the survival possibilities of any Graeco-Judaean efforts at self-definition in this period.

the Graeco-Roman authors' criticism of Christians for not embracing Judaean ethnic traditions (so, this remained an option), and their assumption that these traditions live still—to the specific.

For example, both Justin and Celsus, in the second century, exploit authentic-seeming Judaean voices[92] (at least, not merely extrapolated from Judaean-Christian debates reflected in the gospels), which they must know from their contemporary experience. Even in Justin's pale figure of Trypho, that voice is learned, engaged with the outside world, and confident about the continuing role of Judaean ancestral traditions. To be sure, Origen polemically challenges the authenticity of Celsus' Judaean, but he does so on the basis of personal knowledge from his own days in Caesarea (*C. Cels.* 1.28, 45, 49, 55). Such experience underlies his claim that the Judaeans use the argument from spell formulas (above) to prove their antiquity to doubters (*C. Cels.* 4.33) and that the Judaean "ethnarch," as a function of the world-wide *didrachma* tax now payable to Rome, enjoys considerable power—both formal and informal, including administering the death penalty, and indulged by his Roman masters (συγχωροῦντος Καίσαρος; *Ep. Afr.* 14). Far away in Macedonia, we have seen, a third-century benefactor demands a huge payment to the Patriarch for any alterations to the synagogue structure he has donated. A few decades later, in about 353 C.E., the Judaeans of Diocaesarea (Sepphoris) revolted against Roman control, reportedly overrunning much of Palestine; the eastern Caesar, Gallus, put down their rebellion and razed Sepphoris (Socrates 2.33; Sozomen 4.7.5). Julian must have been aware of this powerful national-ethnic sentiment when a few years afterward he offered to relieve the Judaeans' burdens and restore Jerusalem with its cult (*Ep.* 51).[93] Although the evidence for Judaean perspectives on the world (outside rabbinic literature) is scarce, such indicators as these combine with the perceptions of outside observers to create the impression of a continuing sense of corporate ethnic identity, without radical redefinition after 70 or 135 (e.g., as "religion"), notwithstanding the temple's loss and the Judaeans' exclusion from Jerusalem.

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[92] On the authenticity of Trypho's voice, see S. G. Wilson, *Related Strangers: Jews and Christians, 70-170 C.E.* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 260-61; on Celsus' Judaean, see now L. Blumell, "A Jew in Celsus' True Doctrine? An Examination of Jewish Anti-Christian Polemic in the Second Century C.E.," forthcoming in *Studies in Religion / Sciences Religieuses*.

[93] A recent discussion of the relevant texts and the letter's authenticity is in R. J. Hoffmann, *Julian's against the Galileans* (Amherst: Prometheus, 2004), 177-83.

Space does not permit worthy engagement with Seth Schwartz's recent argument, tangentially relevant to my case, that from about 70 to 350 "Jewish" identity, or "the core ideology of Judaism" from before 70, nearly dissolved in Judaea and elsewhere (emphasis added): "We *perhaps* need to assume that *some Jews retained a sense of being Jewish* if only to understand how northern Palestine could have become Jewish in a strong sense after 350."[94] His analysis combines and takes much further the scholarly recognition over several decades that (a) rabbinic literature reflects the concerns of a tiny elite and (b) material evidence indicates the limits of rabbinic influence on post-war Judaea. Schwartz's exploration of coinage and iconography—suffused with pagan themes—in Galilean centres is learned and subtle, alongside which he adduces the alleged Roman practice of destroying autonomy and native forms of leadership (other than city councils) when they annexed territory. He proposes a massive "disaffection with and attrition from Judaism," "probably everywhere," after the failed revolts of 66-70 and 132-135.[95]

Interpretation of coins and symbols in the absence of written comment from the ancients is difficult, however, partly because of what Denis Feeney describes as "the capacity of educated Greeks and Romans . . . to entertain different kinds of assent and criteria of judgment in different contexts, in ways that strike the modern observer as mutually contradictory."[96] We cannot deduce conceptions from symbols. Evidence for mass defection from Judaean laws following 70 or 135 seems unavailable and vastly outweighed by evidence for Judaizing. Josephus must be ranked among those who most deeply mourned the loss of the temple (the subject of his *War*, e.g. 1.9-12), but he is also the most enthusiastic advocate of Judaean law and custom, even decades after the destruction. If we should suppose that the defection occurred after 135, why not already after 70? But if after 70, how was the revolt of 132-135 possible? And if not after 70, why suppose it after 135? As for a radically new Roman administrative style after 135: when Judaea was annexed in 6 C.E. no such consequences followed. The general character of provincial administration outside Egypt does not suggest a Roman bureaucracy in Judaea (Palaestina) of such scope that it could or would manage local affairs.[97]

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[94] Schwartz, *Imperialism*, 103-76, here 105.

[95] Schwartz, *Imperialism*, 108.

[96] D. Feeney, *Literature and Religion at Rome: Cultures, Contexts, and Beliefs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 14.

[97] Cf. P. A. Brunt, *Roman Imperial Themes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 264-66,

The greatest difficulty arises from Schwartz's conceptual-linguistic framework, illustrated in the following (emphasis added):

> We can only speculate about the character of *its Jewishness* before that date [350 C.E.]; for now it may prove instructive to imagine *Judaism*, or rather the disintegrated shards of *Judaism*, surviving as a *nonexclusive religious option* in a *religious system that was basically pagan*.[98]

The categories "Judaism" and "Jewishness" are neither present in the texts ("emic"), in which case we might evaluate what the ancients thought about them, nor etic, in which case we could gather data and measure them by agreed standards. What do these categories mean, then, and where are the criteria for evaluating them? If *cultus* is the issue, it was simply absent after the year 70; there could be no question of "fleeing" from it. If *ethnos*, law, and custom: it appears (above) that these remained intact after 135, even if they were reinterpreted then as they had also been at various points before 70 in very diverse ways.[99]

Scholars have raised two main objections to the translation of *Ioudaios* as "Judaean." One is a common assertion that the word is a *geographical* term only, and is therefore only one aspect of identity and not the most important, not at all appropriate for the diaspora. One frequently meets the observation that in some passage (e.g., in Josephus) *Ioudaios* may mean "Judaean" (i.e., in or belonging to the territory of greater or proper Judaea), but in other passages the word has *no such geographical constraints and therefore* should be rendered "Jew."[100] The foregoing analysis, however, has

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267-81, 302-305; A. Lintott, *Imperium Romanum: Politics and Administration* (London: Routledge, 1993), 54-69, 132-53; generally, C. Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); E. Meyer-Zwiffelhoffer, Πολιτικῶς ἄρχειν: *zum Regierungsstil der senatorischen Statthalter in den kaiserzeitlichen griechischen Provinzen* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2003).

[98] Schwartz, *Imperialism*, 105.

[99] Once we shift the framework from "Judaism" to Judaean identity (the viability of the ethnos), it becomes impossible to know on historical grounds what would have happened to this identity if, e.g., Jason, Menelaus, and Alcimus had succeeded. Their intent does not appear to have been the dissolution of the *ethnos*: cf. 1 Macc 1:11 and E. J. Bickerman, *The God of the Maccabees: Studies on the Meaning and Origin of the Maccabean Revolt* (Leiden: Brill, 1979 [1937]), 24-31; K. Bringmann, *Hellenistische Reform und Religionsverfolgung in Judäa* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983), 99-111.

[100] E.g., Lowe, "'ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ," 103-106; S. J. D., "ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΣ ΤΟ ΓΕΝΟΣ," in *Josephus and the History of the Greco-Roman Period* (ed. F. Parente and J. Sievers; Leiden: Brill, 1994), 26-27.

tried to show that "Judaean" does not have a geographical restriction, any more than other ethnic descriptors do. Such a restriction *in our minds* arises from the absence of a political entity called Judaea today, so that when we hear the word we think first of an ancient place and not of the people. But just as "Roman," "Egyptian," and "Greek" (etc.) had a wide range of associations beyond the geographical, and they do not require us to substitute other terms when we refer to "Roman citizens" or call Lucian a "Greek," so too "Judaean" should be allowed to shoulder its burden as an ethnic term full of complex possibilities. If modern Israel had been called "Yehudah," there would be Judaeans today and the nomenclature of "Judaean customs / traditions" (as in "the Judaean community of Toronto") would not sound strange. In the Hellenistic-Roman period there *was* a Judaea, which everyone knew about, and there were Judaeans as surely as there were Egyptians and Babylonians. Translating "Judaeans" requires us to locate ourselves in that other time, but that seems to be no bad thing for historians. Using two different translations for the same word, in this case uniquely, destroys the unified conception that insiders and outsiders evidently had of the *Ioudaioi*.

Again, the main impetus for redefining the *Ioudaioi* not as members of the living culture of Judaea, but as a homeless and humiliated people in a perpetual state of aporia who could only cling to a few strange-seeming practices, came from Christian authors. The evidence for "anti-Judaism" among Christians (actually: *anti-Judaean* sentiment, which resulted in the *construction* of "Judaism" as system; see Part I above) need not be rehearsed here. From the beginning some Christian teachers found it important to their self-understanding to depict the *Ioudaioi* as bereft, cut loose, cast down, destroyed, even dead.[101] Origen is clear and typical (*C. Cels*. 2.8):

> …and so God's watchful care (ἐπισκοπή) over the Judaeans was transferred (μεταβιβάζουσαν) to those from the *ethne* [or gentiles] who trusted in him. And one may see after Jesus' coming the Judaeans entirely left behind

[101] Already Paul in 1 Thess 2:14-16 and Gal 3-4; Matt 8:11-12; 22:1-15. From a vast literature, P. Richardson, D. Granskou, and S. G. Wilson, eds., *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity* (2 vols.; Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986), and J. Lieu, *Image and Reality: The Jews in the World of the Christians in the Second Century* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1996) offer breadth and judicious analysis.

(καταλελειμμένους) and possessing none of those things they considered awe-inspiring from antiquity; but there is not the merest hint of divinity among them ... For which *ethnos* except the Judaeans alone has been banished from its mother-city and its own place along with the ancestral cult? (Ποῖον γὰρ ἔθνος πεφυγάδευται ἀπὸ τῆς ἰδίας μητροπόλεως καὶ τοῦ οἰκείου τόπου τῇ πατρίῳ θρησκείᾳ ἢ μόνοι Ἰουδαῖοι).

Whereas scholars propose that the *Ioudaioi* had come to constitute a "religion" by Origen's time, having shed or diminished their geographical-ethnic character, his own view is nearly the precise opposite. His most plausible option for displacing them lies in observing that they now constitute *an ethnos only*, because they lack the cult (and so divine favour) that normally goes along with status as an *ethnos*. Whereas Tertullian has limited knowledge of contemporary realia in the Judaean homeland, Origen lived in Caesarea and knows the reality well. He moves rhetorically from *Jerusalem's* current woes to the peculiarity of the Judaeans' status among the *ethne*, but he cannot deny that they *are* an ancient and abiding *ethnos*. Describing them as having a *cultus without an ethnos*, or some such thing, would have been absurd; "religion" was not an option for him.

"Some Christian teachers," it must be said, because we should not forget the evidence in the margins for the ongoing appeal of Judaean law and culture among other Christians, which must owe something to the Judaeans' prestige as an *ethnos* of great antiquity with recognized laws. It is no romanticization to observe that Judaea and its diaspora continued to offer Judaizers a civilization, a grounded culture with a full suite of law and custom, *not* merely a system of belief, as Christianity seemed to be—a form that still proved difficult to explain in available categories.

The second objection to "Judaean" has to do with what we normally label "conversion to Judaism," which has predisposed scholars to employ the language of religion. Cohen identifies the conversion of foreign peoples under the Hasmonaeans as the decisive moment in the development of a religious sense for *Ioudaios*. He had titled a famous article on the subject "Respect for Judaism by Gentiles According to Josephus"—though Josephus does not speak of "Judaism." Cohen's analysis there is at once puzzling and revealing of the category problem (emphasis added):

For Josephus, then, "adherence" and "conversion" are *ill-defined concepts* that never receive extended discussion (*Since they are not Josephan terms*, they appear in quotation marks throughout this essay).

But what is one quoting, if not Josephus? Why not analyze Josephus' own language? How may one say that a certain concept remains "ill-defined" in Josephus when it simply does not exist there?

With respect to the lengthy narrative in Josephus (*Ant.* 20.17-96) on the conversion of Adiabene's royal family, Cohen makes the following argument (emphasis added):[102]

> Separate from, or in addition to, this ethnic-geographic meaning, Ἰουδαῖος can also have a *religious meaning*. A Ἰουδαῖος is someone who believes (or is supposed to believe) certain distinctive *tenets*, and/or follows (or is supposed to follow) certain distinctive practices, and/or is a member (or is supposed to be a member) of certain distinctive *religious organizations*—in other words, a Ἰουδαῖος is a *Jew, someone who follows Judaism*, the way of life of the Jews. The clearest Josephan examples of this usage occur in the *Antiquities'* account of the conversion of the royal house of Adiabene... In these passages, *which speak about conversion to Judaism*, the ethnic-geographic meaning of Ἰουδαῖος is *entirely absent*, and *only a religious meaning* is intended. A gentile can become a Ἰουδαῖος, a Jew.

The tacit complement to the final sentence appears to be: "A gentile could not become a Judaean."

Given that the categories "Judaism" and "religion" (or "religious organization") do not appear in Josephus and did not exist in his world, Cohen's analysis presents problems. In fact, the passage in question *brims* with the standard language of *ethnos*, law, and custom, as do Josephus' narratives generally. *Josephus* does not speak of a "religious conversion," but rather of adopting or going over to *foreign laws, customs, and ways*, and that language is precisely what lends the story its force.

In the first part of this essay, we observed the ancient prejudice against forsaking one's ancestral traditions in favour of *foreign* ones: even Medizing or Atticizing out of political necessity could bring retribution. Hellenizing, an issue also for Rome in her encounters with Greece,[103] became a life-or-death issue in Judaea under Antiochus IV. Herodotus (4.76) illustrates the normal fear of foreign ways with his story of the sage Anacharsis, a Scythian who sought out Greek wisdom and, on returning home, was killed for

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[102] Cohen, "ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΣ," 27.

[103] E. S. Gruen, *Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992).

celebrating foreign rites. Although Greeks and Romans were generally happy to tolerate foreign visitors or the addition of foreign customs to the native tradition, the Judaeans posed a unique threat, because adoption of their exclusive laws required abandonment of one's native traditions. We have seen this above in Philo's description of those who choose to live under Judaean law, and this is the world we enter in the story of Adiabene.

This is a *political* story, in keeping with the constitutional themes of the *Antiquities*. The controlling theme is announced in the topic sentence (*Ant.* 20.17): Queen Helena and her son Izates "exchanged their way of life for the customs of the Judaeans" (εἰς τὰ Ἰουδαίων ἔθη τὸν βίον μετέβαλον). In the elaboration at *Ant.* 20.34-36 we learn that a visiting Judaean merchant had first taught Izates' wives "to worship God in the way that was *traditional* among the Judaeans" (ὡς Ἰουδαίοις πάτριον ἦν), after which the king learned that his mother also "had been brought over (μετακεκομίσθαι) to their laws." Things come to a head at 20.38-39. Note the language here:

> When Izates discovered that his mother was very pleased with the *customs of the Judaeans* (τοῖς Ἰουδαίων ἔθεσιν χαίρειν), he moved quickly to go over to them himself. Supposing that he could not be a real Judaean unless he were circumcised (νομίζων τε μὴ ἂν εἶναι βεβαίως Ἰουδαῖος,[104] εἰ μὴ περιτέμοιτο), he was ready to do it.

Helena objects that this will be dangerous. Observe her reasoning:

> For he was a king, and it would generate massive ill will if his subjects should learn that he was devoted to *customs that were foreign and alien* to them (ὅτι ξένων ἐπιθυμήσειεν καὶ ἀλλοτρίων αὐτοῖς ἐθῶν): *they would not tolerate a Judaean being their king.*

Although the Judaean merchant assured Izates that he could worship the deity without circumcision "if indeed he had resolved to *emulate the ancestral traditions* of the Judaeans" (20.41), another teacher, "reputed to be precise in the ancestral traditions," admonished him to go ahead with the crucial ritual (20.43). So he did, secretly. When his mother and the merchant found out, they became apoplectic: "*because* his subjects would not tolerate a man ruling them who was a *devotee of foreign customs*" (20.47).

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[104] Note the word-play in the rhyme of these two words.

Similarly, when Izates' older brother wished later to adopt Judaean customs, the Adiabenian elite resolved to punish him "because he had come *to despise their own customs*" (μισήσοντα τὰ παρ᾽ αὐτοῖς ἔθη; 20.77).

The civic, political, and social character of the Adiabenian royals' initiative is emphasized by Josephus. Helena soon visits Jerusalem, he narrates, where she will spend most of her remaining years; she brings in food supplies to alleviate famine and builds a palace along with other monumental structures, one of which will serve as her tomb (*Ant.* 20.49-53, 95-96; *War* 4.567; 5.147, 252-253)—the sarcophagus now housed in the Louvre. Likewise, Izates sends famine relief (20.53) and even dispatches his five young sons "to learn precisely our ancestral language and culture" (τὴν . . . γλῶτταν τὴν παρ᾽ ἡμῖν πάτριον καὶ παιδείαν ἀκριβῶς μαθησομένους; 20.71). A couple of decades later, two relatives of Monobazus, king of Adiabene in the 60s, are credited with a crucial role in the Judaeans' initial, successful attack on Cestius Gallus' Twelfth Legion (*War* 2.520). And "the brothers and sons of King Izates"—presumably, the very sons who had grown up in Jerusalem—were reportedly among the last hold-outs in September of 70, who sued for terms with an infuriated Titus; he took them to Rome as hostages for Adiabene's future quiescence (*War* 6.356-357). Mother, son, and grandchildren, therefore, were indeed "real Judaeans," just as Izates had first desired. It is not possible to abstract from this dramatic political realignment an affair of "religion."

Josephus' brief account of another foreign king, Polemo of Cilicia, who had himself circumcised and took on the Judaeans' customs in order to marry Berenice, gives the same impression. When she deserted him, Josephus says, Polemo was "at once *liberated from* the marriage *and from* persevering in the Judaeans' customs" (τοῦ τοῖς ἔθεσι τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐμμένειν ἀπήλλακτο; *Ant.* 20.146). Lacking the Adiabienians' enthusiasm for these foreign laws, evidently, the Cilician king's adoption of them had (in the story) proven a significant burden.

That adopting Judaean laws involved a decisive shift from one *ethnos* to another is clear across the range of evidence. Even in the ahistorical and rarefied romance *Joseph and Aseneth*, Pentephres' daughter at first rejects her father's proposal out of hand *because she worships the Gods of the Egyptians* (2.4-5) and will not marry a man of *another race*, a former prisoner at that, and a Canaanite (4.12-13). When she finally decides to marry Joseph, accordingly, this entails the rejection of "the gods of the Egyptians" (12.5), which in turn distances her from her parents (2.11).

Similar issues of ethnic and familial connections receive considerable play in Tacitus' famous description of the *Iudaei* (*Hist.* 5.1-13):

> For the worst element [from other nations], their ancestral devotions left scorned, kept sending tribute and levies to *that place* [Jerusalem], thus growing the wealth of the Judaeans (*Nam pessimus quisque spretis religionibus patriis tributa et stipes illuc congerebant, unde auctae Iudaeorum*) (5.5).

This is all ethnic and political language: defaulting in basic respect for one's ancestral tradition, pursuing *foreign customs*, and even making an *alien city* wealthy. Judaeans practise circumcision, Tacitus continues, in order to be recognized by this difference:

> And those who have gone over *to their custom* practise the same thing. There is nothing they absorb more quickly than to disdain the Gods, to *abandon their ancestral land, to hold in contempt parents, children, brothers* (*Transgressi in morem eorum idem usurpant, nec quicquam prius imbuuntur quam contemnere deos, exuere patriam, parentes liberos fratres vilia habere*).

This is almost precisely what Philo says, except that he welcomes the transformation.

Most interesting is the language of the Roman senator Cassius Dio. He first explains (37.16.5) that "The region has been named Judaea, and the people themselves Judaeans" (ἥ τε γὰρ χώρα ᾽Ιουδαία καὶ αὐτοὶ ᾽Ιουδαῖοι ὠνομάδαται), confirming the translation advocated here. He goes on to describe their temple in Jerusalem, their beliefs, and practices, without any apology for speaking of the *Ioudaioi* as a functioning *ethnos* even at his time of writing in the third century. In translating this passage it seems impossible to justify any word other than "Judaeans" for the *Ioudaioi*, given Dio's connection of the people's name with that of the place, under the same verb, though still the Loeb edition renders "Jews." Matters get very interesting with what comes next. Dio observes (37.17.1) that "this appellation [*Ioudaioi*] applies also to all the other people who emulate their legal code, even if they are of foreign ethnicity" (ἡ δὲ ἐπίκλησις… φερεὶ δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους, ὅσοι τὰ νόμιμα αὐτῶν, καίπερ ἀλλοεθνεῖς ὄντες, ζηλοῦσι). Plainly, as for Tacitus, it is remarkable to Dio that members of one *ethnos* should be able to identify with another one in this way. The language is explicitly ethnic, not "religious" (whatever that

could mean). We must speak here of "Judaeans," given the first part of the passage, and we have no basis for abruptly switching to "Jews" for the sequel about emulation of foreigners' laws. This perception of national betrayal was presumably the reason why, according to the epitome of Dio's later account, the prospect of "drifting off into the ways of the Judaeans" (ἐς τὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἤθη ἐξοκέλοντες) caused such upheaval among members of the Roman elite at the end of the first century (67.14.2; 68.1.2).

When we describe "conversion to Judaism" in the Roman world as if it were a religious phenomenon akin to something in modern experience, we fail to capture the main problem expressed by ancient observers, from the Adiabenian nobility to the Roman: they could not accept it, *because* it involved a betrayal of the native *ethnos* and its ancestral traditions. The issue could not be for them, and it was not, framed as one of "religious" choice.

We close the circle by returning to Josephus' more systematic comments on adoption of Judaean laws. We noted above his response to Apion's complaint that Judaeans could not be Alexandrians. Later in the same volume he crafts a prospectus of the Judaean constitution designed to obviate, among other things, the accusation of misanthropy, by demonstrating the Judaeans' posture of humanity toward the world (φιλανθρωπία). An essential part of this posture is the welcome given to those from other ἔθνη (πρὸς ἀλλοφύλους) who wish to come and live under the highly philosophical Judaean laws (*Apion* 2.210). Here again, what we call "conversion" is actually a matter of adopting a *new citizenship*. Only so can we understand why Josephus contrasts the *Spartan* concern to protect their laws (paralleled also among the Athenians), which resulted *for them* in xenophobia and the expulsion of foreigners, with the Judaeans' equal concern to protect their laws, accompanied however by a welcome extended to all those wishing to live under their laws (2.259-61).

Again, the available categories are ethnic and political, with a strong philosophical tinge. That *we* insist on the religious nature of conversion is our problem, a function of our time and place. Josephus and his Judaean contemporaries did not see it that way. Since they knew no "religion" of "Judaism," there could be no "religious conversion" in modern senses.

Conclusions and Corollaries

It is quite proper that modern histories of the Jews or Judaism should track the vicissitudes of this people across millennia, in the same way that one

may write histories of the English, Greeks, Italians, Germans, and Christians over twenty or more centuries. But in all such cases we recognize that ancient conditions, terminology, and categories were different from our own. Hellas was of course not modern "Greece"; the *Germani* of Tacitus or the later Angles were not without further ado "Germans" and "English." That the modern words "emperor," "prince," and "Kaiser / Czar" have developed from *imperator, princeps*, and *Caesar* does not justify substituting the modern terms for the ancient, because those words meant something different. In the same way, although "Jew" and "Judaism" have developed from Ἰουδαῖος / Ἰουδαϊσμός and cognates, the Greek and Latin terms carried a different charge in their ancient contexts. In many of these cases, there is no great harm in using the familiar terms for popular studies, which can gently explain the historical situation. For academic purposes, the simplest solution is often to use the ancient terms themselves in transliteration, as we often do for *princeps* and *imperator*. But this is of dubious merit in translation projects, and cumbersome in other efforts to make the fruits of scholarship more broadly accessible. In the case of *Ioudaios / Iudaeus*, the most adequate English option is "Judaean," by analogy with the other ethnica alongside which ancient writers consistently place it.

The *Ioudaioi* of the Graeco-Roman world remained an ἔθνος: a people associated with a place and its customs—no matter how far, or how long, they had been away from Judaea. The many upheavals in Judaean politics between 200 B.C.E. and 200 C.E. had no discernible effect on this category, any more than the destructions of Carthage and rebellious Corinth in 146 B.C.E., the many reversals in Macedonian or Spartan or Pergamene fortunes during the two centuries B.C.E., or the abrupt change in Egypt's status in 30 B.C.E., required a change of name for the people concerned. Carthaginians, Corinthians, Egyptians, and other peoples were still known by their traditional names, as living—if humbled—ἔθνη. So also, to themselves and outside observers, the *Ioudaioi* remained what they always had been: Judaeans. There was no ready alternative, since the Graeco-Roman world knew no category of religion, no *-isms* denoting religious allegiance, and no "Judaism."

The rare *Ioudaismos* ("Judaization") was usable only in the special context of movement toward or away from Judaean law and life, in contrast to some other cultural pull. That is why the term is hardly ever used. *Ioudaismos* as a belief system and way of life—as a *concept* abstracted from the realities of Judaea, Jerusalem, temple and priesthood, sacrificial cult, aristocratic governance, political constituton, ancestral laws, and traditions—was the

construction of an ascendant *Christianismos* from the third to fifth centuries C.E. *Christianismos* was itself a new and hybrid kind of group, which drew elements from *ethne*, cults, philosophies, *collegia*, and magical systems; it was also based initially in households.[105] After long struggles to define its place in the world by existing categories, some of its teachers began to turn the tables: they made a true -*ism* of what had been initially (in Paul and Ignatius) a conversionist calque on *Ioudaismos* and asserted its revealed normativeness, constructing both a static *Hellenismos* / *Paganismos* and a *Ioudaismos* as foils, to facilitate polemical contrast. It was not until the Enlightenment's encounter with world cultures that full-fledged "religion" appeared as an isolable category. Critical historical scholarship's use of these late-antique and modern constructions as if they were live possibilities in antiquity creates conceptual mismatches at every step.

If the foregoing argument is valid, important consequences follow, not least for the comparison of "Judaism" and "Christianity." It becomes increasingly clear being a "Judaean" and being a follower of Jesus were incommensurable categories, rather like being a Russian or a Rotarian, a Brazilian or a Bridge player. Scholars know this well, but our continued use of "religion," as if this were the *genus* of which "Judaism" and "Christianity" were two *species*, tends to de-historicize and obfuscate the matter. Whereas the *Ioudaioi* were understood not as a "licensed religion" (*religio licita*) but as an *ethnos*, the followers of Jesus faced formidable problems explaining exactly what they were, and increasingly so as they distanced themselves from, and were disavowed by, the well-known *ethnos*. The single most pressing question for followers of Jesus, "Are we part of the Judaean *ethnos* or not?," was finessed in countless ways. It seems to have been Tertullian's rejection of all such efforts that catalysed the newly confident programme of Christian normativeness, with the reformulation of other options as pale imitations of its own -*ism*. Although that approach would soon dominate Christian discourse, it did not persuade everyone. The Judaizing that we observe among gentile Christians from the first to the fourth centuries must have been due in some measure to a sense of Christianism's continuing vulnerability, still assailed by Julian in the mid-fourth century.

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[105] Nock, *Conversion*, 187-211, esp. 205, 210-11; now Rives, "Christian Expansion," 32-38, 41.